PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

SIXTH SERIES—VOLUME 422 (Part 2)

HOUSE OF COMMONS

OFFICIAL REPORT

THIRD SESSION OF THE FIFTY-THIRD PARLIAMENT
OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND NORTHERN IRELAND
FIFTY-THIRD YEAR OF THE REIGN OF
HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

SESSION 2003–04

COMPRISING PERIOD
7 June—24 June 2004

£105
(Two parts not sold separately)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
REFERENCE ONLY

Cam1Ref
C12104

HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

(FORMED BY THE RT. HON. TONY BLAIR, MP, JUNE 2001)

IME MINISTER, FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY AND MINISTER FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE—The Rt. Hon. Tony Blair, MP
PUTY PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. John Prescott, MP
ANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER—The Rt. Hon. Gordon Brown, MP
CRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS—The Rt. Hon. Jack Straw, MP
CRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT—The Rt. Hon. David Blunkett, MP
CRETARY OF STATE FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS—The Rt. Hon. Margaret Beckett, MP
CRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SCOTLAND—The Rt. Hon. Alistair Darling, MP
CRETARY OF STATE FOR HEALTH— The Rt. Hon. Dr. John Reid, MP
CRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND—The Rt. Hon. Paul Murphy, MP
CRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE—The Rt. Hon. Geoffrey Hoon, MP
CRETARY OF STATE FOR WORK AND PENSIONS—The Rt. Hon. Andrew Smith, MP
CRETARY OF STATE FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY—The Rt. Hon. Patricia Hewitt, MP
CRETARY OF STATE FOR CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT—The Rt. Hon. Tessa Jowell, MP
RLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY—The Rt. Hon. Hilary Armstrong, MP
CRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS—The Rt. Hon. Charles Clarke, MP
IEF SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY—The Rt. Hon. Paul Boateng, MP
ADER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WALES AND LORD PRIVY SEAL—The Rt. Hon. Peter Hain, MP
NISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO—The Rt. Hon. Ian McCartney, MP
ADER OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS AND PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL—The Rt. Hon. The Baroness Amos
CRETARY OF STATE FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS AND LORD CHANCELLOR (FOR THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD) —The Rt. Hon. The Lord Falconer of Thoroton, QC
CRETARY OF STATE FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT—The Rt. Hon. Hilary Benn, MP

DEPARTMENTS OF STATE AND MINISTERS

fice of the Deputy Prime Minister—
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. John Prescott, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for Local and Regional Government—The Rt. Hon. Nick Raynsford, MP
Minister for Regeneration and the Regions—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Rooker
Minister for Housing and Planning— The Rt. Hon. Keith Hill, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
Yvette Cooper, MP
Phil Hope, Esq, MP
binet Office—
MINISTER FOR THE CABINET OFFICE AND CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER—Douglas Alexander, Esq, MP
nstitutional Affairs—
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Falconer of Thoroton, QC
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
Christopher Leslie, Esq, MP
David Lammy, Esq, MP
The Lord Filkin, CBE
Anne McGuire, MP (Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Scotland)
Don Touhig, Esq, MP (Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Wales)
lture, Media and Sport—
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT—The Rt. Hon. Tessa Jowell, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for Sport and Tourism—The Rt. Hon. Richard Caborn, MP
Minister for the Arts—The Rt. Hon. Estelle Morris, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE—
The Rt. Hon. The Lord McIntosh of Haringey (Minister for Media and Heritage)

Defence—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Geoffrey Hoon, MP
MINISTER OF STATE—
The Rt. Hon. Adam Ingram, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
The Lord Bach (Minister for Defence Procurement)
Ivor Caplin, Esq, MP

Education and Skills—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Charles Clarke, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for School Standards—David Miliband, Esq, MP
Minister for Children—The Rt. Hon. Margaret Hodge, MP
Minister for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education—The Rt. Hon. Alan Johnson, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
The Baroness Ashton of Upholland
Ivan Lewis, Esq, MP
Stephen Twigg, Esq, MP

Environment, Food and Rural Affairs—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Margaret Beckett, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for Rural Affairs and Local Environmental Quality—The Rt. Hon. Alun Michael, MP
Minister for the Environment— Elliot Morley, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
The Lord Whitty
Ben Bradshaw, Esq, MP

Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Jack Straw, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for the Middle East—The Rt. Hon. The Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean
Minister for Europe— Denis MacShane, Esq, MP
Minister for Trade and Investment—Mike O'Brien, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
Bill Rammell, Esq, MP
Chris Mullin, Esq, MP

Health—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Dr. John Reid, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
The Rt. Hon. John Hutton, MP
Rosie Winterton, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
Miss Melanie Johnson, MP
Dr. Stephen Ladyman, MP
The Lord Warner

Home Office—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. David Blunkett, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for Crime Reduction, Policing and Community Safety— Ms Hazel Blears, MP
Minister for Criminal Justice System and Law Reform—The Baroness Scotland of Asthal, QC
Minister for Citizenship and Immigration—Desmond Browne, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
Paul Goggins, Esq, MP
Caroline Flint, MP
Fiona Mactaggart, MP

International Development—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Hilary Benn, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE—Gareth Thomas, Esq, MP

Law Officers' Department—
ATTORNEY-GENERAL—The Rt. Hon. Lord Goldsmith, QC
SOLICITOR-GENERAL—The Rt. Hon. Harriet Harman, QC, MP
ADVOCATE-GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND—Dr. Lynda Clark, QC, MP

Leader of the House of Commons—
LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—The Rt. Hon. Peter Hain, MP
DEPUTY LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—Phil Woolas, Esq, MP

Northern Ireland Office—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Paul Murphy, MP
MINISTER OF STATE—
The Rt. Hon. John Spellar, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
Ian Pearson, Esq, MP
Angela Smith, MP
Barry Gardiner, Esq, MP

Paymaster General's Office—
PAYMASTER GENERAL—The Rt. Hon. Dawn Primarolo, MP

Privy Council Office—
LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL AND LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS— The Rt. Hon. The Baroness Amos

Trade and Industry—
SECRETARY OF STATE AND MINISTER FOR WOMEN AND EQUALITY—The Rt. Hon. Patricia Hewitt, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for Energy, E-Commerce and Postal Services—Stephen Timms, Esq, MP
Minister for Trade and Investment—Mike O'Brien, Esq, MP
Minister for Industry and the Regions and Deputy Minister for Women and Equality— The Rt. Hon. Jacqui Smith, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
The Lord Sainsbury of Turville (Minister for Science and Innovation)
Nigel Griffiths, Esq, MP (Minister for Small Business and Enterprise)
Gerry Sutcliffe, Esq, MP (Minister for Employment Relations, Competition and Consumers)

Transport—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Alistair Darling, MP
MINISTER OF STATE—
Dr. Kim Howells, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE—
David Jamieson, Esq, MP
Tony McNulty, Esq, MP

Treasury—
PRIME MINISTER, FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY AND MINISTER FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE—The Rt. Hon. Tony Blair, MP
CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER—The Rt. Hon. Gordon Brown, MP
CHIEF SECRETARY—The Rt. Hon. Paul Boateng, MP
PAYMASTER GENERAL—The Rt. Hon. Dawn Primarolo, MP
FINANCIAL SECRETARY—Ms Ruth Kelly, MP
ECONOMIC SECRETARY—John Healey, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY—The Rt. Hon. Hilary Armstrong, MP
LORDS COMMISSIONERS—
John Heppell, Esq, MP
Nick Ainger, Esq, MP
Jim Murphy, Esq, MP
Derek Twigg, Esq, MP
Joan Ryan, MP
ASSISTANT WHIPS—
Fraser Kemp, Esq, MP
Charlotte Atkins, MP
Gillian Merron, MP
Vernon Coaker, Esq, MP
Paul Clark, Esq, MP
Margaret Moran, MP
Bridget Prentice, MP

Work and Pensions—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Andrew Smith, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for Work—The Rt. Hon. Jane Kennedy, MP
Minister for Pensions—Malcolm Wicks, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
The Rt. Hon. The Baroness Hollis of Heigham
Maria Eagle, MP
Chris Pond, Esq, MP

Her Majesty's Household—
LORD CHAMBERLAIN—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Luce, GCVO
LORD STEWARD—The Duke of Abercorn, KG
MASTER OF THE HORSE—The Lord Vestey
TREASURER—Bob Ainsworth, Esq, MP
COMPTROLLER—Thomas McAvoy, Esq, MP
VICE-CHAMBERLAIN—Jim Fitzpatrick, Esq, MP
CAPTAIN OF THE HONOURABLE CORPS OF GENTLEMEN-AT-ARMS—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Grocott
CAPTAIN OF THE QUEEN'S BODYGUARD OF THE YEOMAN OF THE GUARD—The Lord Davies of Oldham
LORDS IN WAITING—The Lord Bassam of Brighton, The Lord Evans of Temple Guiting
BARONESSES IN WAITING—The Baroness Farrington of Ribbleton, The Baroness Andrews, OBE, The Baroness Crawley

---

SECOND CHURCH ESTATES COMMISSIONER, REPRESENTING CHURCH COMMISSIONERS— Sir Stuart Bell, MP

HOUSE OF COMMONS

THE SPEAKER—The Rt. Hon. Michael J. Martin, MP

CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS—The Rt. Hon. Sir Alan Haselhurst, MP

FIRST DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS—Mrs. Sylvia Heal, MP

SECOND DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS—Sir Michael Lord, MP

CHAIRMEN'S PANEL—
Mrs. Irene Adams, MP, David Amess, Esq, MP, Janet Anderson, MP, Nigel Beard, Esq, MP, Miss Anne Begg, MP, Joe Benton, Esq, MP, Sir John Butterfill, MP, Martin Caton, Esq, MP, David Chidgey, Esq, MP, Derek Conway, Esq, MP, Frank Cook, Esq, MP, James Cran, Esq, MP, John Cummings, Esq, MP, The Rt. Hon. Eric Forth, MP, Roger Gale, Esq, MP, Win Griffiths, Esq, MP, Mike Hancock, Esq, MP, Jimmy Hood, Esq, MP, Kevin Hughes, Esq, MP, Alan Hurst, Esq, MP, Eric Illsley, Esq, MP, John McWilliam, Esq, MP, Bill O'Brien, Esq, MP, Edward O'Hara, Esq, MP, Bill Olner, Esq, MP, Peter Pike, Esq, MP, Mrs. Marion Roe, MP, Jonathan Sayeed, Esq, MP, George Stevenson, Esq, MP, David Taylor, Esq, MP, The Rt. Hon. Miss Ann Widdecombe, MP, Sir Nicholas Winterton, MP

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION—
The Rt. Hon. The Speaker (Chairman), The Rt. Hon. Peter Hain, MP, Oliver Heald, Esq, MP, Sir Archy Kirkwood, MP, Sir Stuart Bell, MP, Sir Patrick Cormack, FSA, MP

SECRETARY OF THE COMMISSION—Robert Rogers

ASSISTANT SECRETARY —Shona McGlashan

AUDIT COMMITTEE—
Oliver Heald, Esq, MP (Chairman), Sir Archy Kirkwood, MP, Sir Thomas S. Legg, KCB, QC, David Taylor, FCA

SECRETARY OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE—Dr. Mark Egan

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT—
Roger Sands, (Chief Executive), George Cubie, CB (Clerk of Committees, Department of the Clerk of the House), Sir Michael Cummins (Serjeant at Arms), Priscilla Baines (Librarian), Andrew Walker (Director of Finance and Administration), Bill Garland (Editor of the Official Report), Sue Harrison (Director of Catering Services)

SECRETARY OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT—Richard Ware, DPhil

SPEAKER'S SECRETARY—Roger Daw

SPEAKER'S COUNSEL—John Vaux

SPEAKER'S CHAPLAIN—Rev. Canon Robert Wright

MEDICAL ADVISER TO THE SPEAKER—Dr. Ron Zeegen, OBE, FRCP, MRCS, DObst, RCOG

PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSIONER FOR STANDARDS—Sir Philip Mawer

Written Ministerial Statement

Monday 7 June 2004

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Export Controls

The Minister for Europe (Mr. Denis MacShane): The 2003 Annual Report on Strategic Export controls will be published at 14.30 today as a Command Paper, and copies will be placed in the Library of the House. The report includes information on licensing decisions made during 2003 as well as describing UK policy and international developments in export control regimes.

Annual reports on strategic export controls are an innovation of this Government. Our defence exports licensing system is one of the most rigorous and open in the world and this annual report is a symbol of our commitment to transparency and accountability. This will be the Government's seventh annual report (the first report was published in 1997). The report will be available on the FCO website: www.fco.gov.uk and also published through the Stationery Office.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 8 June 2004

NORTHERN IRELAND

Probation Board

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Paul Murphy): I have today published the Probation Board for Northern Ireland business plan for 2004–05. The plan sets out the board's key objectives and performance targets for the year. Copies of the plan have today been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Health and Social Services Estates Agency

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Angela Smith): Stage two of the quinquennial review of the Northern Ireland Health and Social Services Estates Agency has been completed. The report has been made available in the House of Commons, the House of Lords and the Northern Ireland Assembly's Libraries and on the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety's website.

The conclusion of the stage one report, published on 4 June 2003, was that the Northern Ireland Health and Social Services Estates Agency should remain in being as an agency.

Stage two examined how the agency operated and looked at the potential for improving its future performance. The consultants invited views from a range of respondents, including Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance (NIPSA), HPSS boards trusts, and agencies and departmental staff. Their report makes recommendations to improve the agency's effectiveness and efficiency.

The report's overall conclusion is that much has already been done to address areas for improvement identified in the stage one report. The report recommends, however, more:

monitoring of compliance with policy standards;

consultation and engagement in formulating and monitoring standards;

practically oriented advice to the Department which can influence capital plans;

early engagement with the Department on estate-related policy issues with wider implications for capital planning;

early involvement of the agency in the development and approval of capital plans and business cases;

involvement in the development of policy which may have capital implications;

communication and integration across all parts of the agency.

Implementation of the report's recommendations will improve the effectiveness of the agency and will enhance its ability to contribute to improvements in the quality of care to patients.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Courts Agency

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. Christopher Leslie): My noble Friend the Secretary of State, the Lord Falconer of Thoroton, has made the following written ministerial statement.

"The Queen has agreed that the new courts agency will be named Her Majesty's Courts Service when it is established in April 2005. The Courts Act 2003 allows the Lord Chancellor to create a new executive agency responsible for the administration of the magistrates' courts and the higher courts".

DEFENCE

Department of Defence Mental Health

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): As part of the Ministry of Defence strategy to modernise and improve defence mental health services, I can announce today that the Ministry of Defence has awarded a contract to King's College London, widely recognised as a leader in this field, to establish, in partnership with Defence Medical Services, a Department of Defence Mental Health.

This Department, which will come under the auspices of the Royal College of Defence Medicine, will be based in London as part of the King's College centre for military health research. It will have a small permanent staff, consisting of a senior lecturer in military health studies, who will be appointed by King's, and a clinical senior lecturer and nurse senior lecturer, who will be Defence Medical Services staff. Administrative support and accommodation will be provided by King's.

This department will become a centre of excellence for the study of service mental health conditions, enabling us to develop a better understanding of their causes, treatment and prevention. It will greatly enhance the level of training available to our mental health specialists, and provide invaluable support to our newly enhanced community-based teams of mental health specialists.

Iraq

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): On 4 May, I told the House that 33 cases of civilian deaths, injuries or alleged ill-treatment in Iraq have been investigated by Service Police. The Secretary of State repeated this figure in the House on 10 May, as did the Prime Minister on 12 May.

A detailed verification exercise was put in place to ensure that all cases were being properly investigated and centrally reported. As a result of this continuing exercise it has come to light that the figure given on 4 May failed to incorporate details of investigations from all branches of the Service Police.

The correct number of investigations into civilian deaths, injuries or alleged ill-treatment undertaken at 4 May was 61. Of these 23 were still in progress, 31 had

concluded with no further action being taken and seven were pending a decision whether to prosecute. None of these additional 28 cases relates to detention facilities.

We have initiated a further 14 investigations since 4 May. These new investigations can principally be attributed to the high operational tempo over the last month, and a small number of new allegations made by Iraqi civilians relating to earlier incidents.

Steps have been taken to ensure that information on all Service Police investigations into incidents in Iraq are now held centrally. I will continue to update the House on significant developments as appropriate.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Child Poverty

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Andrew Smith): Today I have published the Government response to the Work and Pensions Committee Second Report of Session 2003–04 [HC 85–1] "Inquiry into Child Poverty in the UK" (CM 6200). Copies have been placed in the Library and are available for the Vote Office.

I am grateful to the Select Committee for their report which is detailed, comprehensive and helpful.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 9 June 2004

NORTHERN IRELAND

Certification Officer

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Barry Gardiner): I have today announced the publication of the Annual Report 2002–03 of the Certification Officer for Northern Ireland and have placed copies in the Libraries of both Houses of Parliament.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Fiona Mactaggart): I am pleased to report that this year's winners of the Queen's Awards for Voluntary Service (previously known as the Queen's Golden Jubilee Award) were announced on Wednesday 2 June.

This prestigious annual Award for groups of volunteers has been given this year to 110 groups whose outstanding voluntary activity has enhanced and improved the quality of life and opportunity for others in the community. The Government actively supports the work of the voluntary and community sector and are encouraging more people to participate in community activity. This Award will give some of those people the recognition they richly deserve. The details of the winning groups are as follows:

	Voluntary Group	*Activity Description*
	East Midlands	
1	Derbyshire Dales Careline	making a daily telephone call to vulnerable, isolated, elderly and housebound people to provide information and conversation.
2	Inspiration FM	encouraging BME communities and disadvantaged people in Northampton to get involved in community radio.
3	Meridale Organisation	Providing a community hall in Sutton-on-Sea for educational, leisure and charity fundraising activities.
4	Radford Care Group	supporting older people in Nottingham living at home independently.
5	SOLVE IT	promoting awareness of the consequences of volatile substance abuse to young people in Northamptonshire.
6	TASC Grub Club	providing Northampton young people, aged 8 upwards, with opportunities to improve their personal and life skills.
7	The Winchester Club	providing opportunities for adults with disabilities in Derby to interact and organise their own group outings.
	East of England	
8	Colchester Rape Crisis Line	Providing support services for women and young people in Colchester and surrounding areas who have experienced sexual violence.
9	Community Meeting Point—Harpenden	Providing recreational and leisure facilities and activities for People with mental health problems.
10	Fledglings	providing a unique nationwide information and practical support service for disabled people, particularly children, their families and carers.
11	Hertfordshire MS Therapy Centre	providing support, counselling, advice and therapeutic services to MS sufferers.
12	Lowestoft Civic Society—Heritage Workshop Centre	preserving the heritage of Lowestoft and district and providing employment for students, unemployed people and those with special needs.
13	March and Chatteris Talking Newspaper Association	providing recorded tapes and tactile reading matter to visually impaired and physically handicapped people in the local community
14	Mind Resource Centre Volunteer Group	Supporting people with severe and enduring mental illness in Norwich, enabling them to live self-supporting lives.
15	Mitalee Youth Association	Providing sports, arts and educational opportunities to young people in Luton from disadvantaged backgrounds.
16	Stalham Brass Band	Encouraging people of all ages to gain traditional skills as brass musicians and providing entertainment at local activities and charity events.
17	The Fragile X Society	Providing support and information to Fragile X families, raising awareness and encouraging research into the syndrome.
18	Young Citizens Guild	Encouraging young people in Great Yarmouth to become better citizens through participation in activities and local events.
19	Youth Plus	Encouraging and supporting young people with learning disabilities in Ongar to be actively involved in the community
	Guernsey	
20	The Guernsey Society for the Physically Disabled	assisting with the provision of facilities for the physically disabled and those with learning difficulties through activities and fund-raising.
	Isle of Man	
21	Manx Blind Welfare Society Volunteer Services	providing support and services for people with visual impairment.
	Jersey	
22	Headway Jersey	providing information and support for people with brain injuries, their relatives and carers.
	London	
23	African Youth Organisation	advancing the education of children and young people in Newham, including African culture and moral development.

	Voluntary Group	Activity Description
24	Age Exchange	improving the quality of life of older people through emphasising the value of their reminiscences.
25	Brent Indian Community Centre	providing services to the Asian community in Brent and encouraging young people to appreciate their heritage.
26	Genuine Empowerment of Mothers in Society	providing advice, advocacy and support to women from disadvantaged and marginalised communities in London.
27	NSF Sunrise—Greenwich group of 'Rethink'	supporting through mutual self-help, seriously mentally ill people, their carers and relatives.
28	Save the World Club	encouraging people of all ages in Kingston-upon-Thames to take pride in their neighbourhood through civic awareness and the promotion of the sustainable use of resources.
29	Somali Family Support Group	providing information, advocacy and advice to Somalis and other East Africans living in London.
30	The Cocktail Crew	visiting oncology and orthopaedic patients in Charing Cross and Hammersmith Hospitals, serving them nutritional supplementary drinks.
31	The Food Chain	providing nutritious services for housebound London residents with AIDS related illnesses.
32	The British Red Cross Skin Camouflage Service	assisting people in London, coping with a disfigurement, and providing support and advice on skin camouflage techniques
	North East	
33	Barnados SECOS Project	providing counselling to children aged 12–18 years in Middlesbrough, abused through prostitution, promoting their well-being and exit from that lifestyle
34	Pennywell Community Association	providing a full range of activities for local residents in Sunderland and addressing their needs.
35	Stockton Blind People's Voice	working to achieve equality for blind and visually impaired people in the Borough.
36	Weardale Open Air Swimming Pool Association	providing affordable water-based activities for the community and its visitors.
	North West	
37	Bolton Hospice Volunteer Team	achieving quality of life for patients and their families through administrative help, support, transport and fundraising.
38	Connect	improving services for disabled children and supporting their families in St Helens
39	Mothers Against Violence	addressing factors leading to gang involvement through an education programme in Manchester, supporting victims and offenders.
40	Northern Fells Group	organising services, events and activities to benefit the welfare of residents of seven rural parishes in Cumbria
41	Sahara in Preston	supporting Asian and African-Caribbean women to participate in the social/economic life of their community.
42	Volunteers of St John's Hospice Lancaster	maintaining the quality of life for those facing life threatening illnesses through a wide range of voluntary activities.
43	Stockport Plaza Trust	providing a venue for community arts and fundraising events and support for restoration of a Grade 2* listed super cinema.
44	Sundowns	supporting Downs Syndrome families in Wirrel and South Wirral through events, activities and a newsletter.
45	The Blacon Project	building a better Blacon through the active involvement of the community to find local solutions to local problems.
46	The PIP Project	working for the social inclusion of children and young people with special needs living in Blackpool and surrounding areas.
	Northern Ireland	
47	Carnany Community Association	enhancing the lives of residents through environmental projects, clubs and events.
48	Moree Community Association	developing and enhancing community spirit through cultural activities, education and support.
49	Simon Community Outspoken Group	raising awareness of homeless issues in Northern Ireland through peer education.
50	The Bann Recorder	providing a news service for visually impaired people in County Down.
51	The Share Holiday Village Volunteer Team	providing a centre for creative, recreational and educational programmes for disabled and non-disabled people.
	Scotland	
52	Alness Environmental Group/Alness in Bloom	undertaking environmental projects within community gardens and provision of floral displays to enhance Alness town centre.
53	Deveron Stroke Club	providing social and therapeutic help to stroke sufferers in Banff, Turriff and surrounding area, their families and carers.
54	Envirokirn Action Group	maintaining the local natural environment in Kirn, through projects and fundraising for the benefit of residents and tourists.
55	Friends	improving the local environment in Stevenston through creative projects for young people.
56	GAIN (Guth Airson/ Iarrtasan Nis)	encouraging social and leisure activities on the Isle of Lewis including environmental awareness.
57	Inverclyde Carers Council	representing the interests and aspirations of local voluntary carers with training and support.
58	Johnstone Credit Union Volunteers—People helping people	providing not-for-profit financial services to the community in Renfrewshire .
59	Orkney Talking Newspaper Association	providing tapes of local newspaper articles for visually impaired and physically disabled residents in the community.
60	The Food Train	providing a low cost shopping delivery service for elderly and disabled people in Dumfries and Galloway.
61	Samaritans of Glasgow	providing emotional support to those in the community who have feelings of distress or despair, including those which may lead to suicide.
62	The Yellow Teapot Club	providing a club for children with special needs aged 6–16 years in West Lothian.
63	Youth United	campaigning and applying for funding for projects and facilities for young people in Airdrie.

	Voluntary Group	Activity Description
	South East	
64	Bucks Search and Rescue	providing training, search and rescue and related emergency services for Buckinghamshire County Council and Thames Valley Police.
65	Caring All Together on Romney Marsh	supporting older and vulnerable people through friendship, support and advice.
66	Court Meadow Group Riding for the Disabled Association	providing riding as therapy for pupils aged 2–19 who have severe learning difficulties.
67	Golden Lion Children's Trust	supporting mentally and physically disabled and socially disadvantaged children in West Sussex, East Sussex, Kent and Surrey.
68	Goring Gap News	reporting on local news, events and featuring items of interest through a monthly magazine.
69	Harmony Variety Group	organising after school clubs in Kent for children of all abilities and needs, encouraging talent and confidence, through performing arts.
70	Oakhaven Voluntary Services Group	supporting hospice staff by providing a service to members of the community suffering from life limiting illnesses.
71	Saturday Club for Deaf Children	providing activities for children aged 5–18 living on the Isle of Wight to develop their social skills, language and confidence.
72	Shepway Volunteer Centre Transport Service	transporting housebound, disabled and elderly residents to appointments and social activities, improving their quality of life
73	Starmaker Theatre Company	providing a centre for young people to develop and gain stage skills through workshops and fundraising events in Reading.
74	Surrey Witness Service	providing an independent, free and confidential service to victims and witnesses at court.
75	The Fountain Centre	caring for physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs of patients and their families in the St Luke's Cancer Centre in Guildford.
76	The Pitstop	a daytime drop-in centre for the homeless, unemployed and socially isolated in Leatherhead and surrounding communities.
77	Volunteer Bureau—Banbury and District	placing volunteers with local organisations and providing the elderly with transport for appointments.
	South West	
78	All Saints Church Community Centre	creating a centre for excellence for statutory voluntary groups, especially those which are marginalized.
79	Community Health Around Torpoint	providing a focal point for community concerns, resources and information, run by volunteers.
80	Disability Action Group in North Dorset	providing direct action to help disabled persons overcome everyday problems.
81	Friends and Residents of Grange Community Association	enhancing the lives of residents and providing advice, social and recreational facilities.
82	FORGE	meeting the needs of visually impaired people in the Forest of Dean.
83	Kennet Gateway Club	providing a social meeting place in Pewsey for adults with learning difficulties.
84	MARAH	befriending and supporting homeless people and those with alcohol, drug and mental illness problems in Stroud.
85	South Gloucestershire Asian Project	improving the lives of Asian people through provision of services and a focus for events.
86	The Home Furniture Service Trust	supplying recycled furniture and household goods, offered at affordable prices, to low income residents in Taunton Deane.
87	The North Devon Maritime Museum	maintaining a museum for local residents and visitors to Appledore through fundraising and events.
88	The Vassall Centre Trust	providing accessible workspace for organisations of disabled people living in and around Bristol.
89	The Villager Community Bus Service	providing extensive, reliable and economical transport for residents of 65 villages in the North Cotswolds.
	Wales	
90	Cymrod CLWB Teithio Dwyfor Travel Club	providing a local community transport service for people unable to use public transport in Dwyfor.
91	Fernhill Association of Residents	representing the community in Mountain Ash and improving their quality of life and well-being.
92	Powys Challenge	reducing crime and the fear of crime, making Powys a safer place.
93	St Kentigern Hospice Volunteers	providing support to patients and families through friendship, transport assistance and community fund raising.
94	Special Needs Activity Club	providing a social club in Neath, Port Talbot for children with disabilities to include their siblings and support for parents.
95	Swffryd Community Centre	promoting the well-being of the community by furthering health, education and recreational activities.
96	Treborth Riding for the Disabled	providing disabled people with riding facilities to benefit their health and well-being.
	West Midlands	
97	Birmingham Chinese Society	assisting the integration of the Chinese and Oriental community into mainstream society.
98	Cheadle and District Home Link Scheme	assisting elderly and housebound people to maintain a dignified independence in their own homes.
99	No Panic	providing relief and rehabilitation for those with anxiety disorders in Shropshire through a confidential helpline and tele-conferencing.
100	Shades of Black Community Family Project	enhancing care in the community in Handsworth through social activities, including cultivation of an allotment for the benefit of senior citizens.
101	St Giles Hospice Volunteers	providing assistance with palliative care services and helping to improve the quality of patients' lives.
102	Tamworth Handicapped Swimming Club (The Unicorns)	providing recreational, teaching and competitive swimming opportunities for disabled people.
103	The Bradby Club	providing a safe meeting place for young people in Rugby with educational, social and cultural recreational opportunities.

	Voluntary Group	*Activity Description*
	Yorkshire and the Humber	
04	Age Concern Knaresborough	providing care and support to disadvantaged and older people in the community.
05	Calderdale Help in Bereavement Service	providing a free and confidential befriending service for the bereaved.
06	Indian Muslim Welfare Society (IMWS)	providing a centre in Batley for interfaith events, helping to portray a positive image and address the needs of Muslims in British Society.
07	Pooh Bear Reading Assistance Society	providing trained volunteer support to build confidence and reading skills of local children through sharing and enjoying books.
08	Pudsey Gateway Club	offering social and leisure activities to people with learning difficulties.
09	St Wilfrid's Day Centre	providing community care for vulnerable people in Sheffield who can experience a sense of belonging and find practical help.
10	The Carers' Resource	providing information, advice and support to carers in Harrogate, Craven and Airedale districts.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Iraq (Export Licences)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Bill Rammell): Following consultation with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Ministry of Defence, the Department of Trade and Industry recently approved a further licence to export Military List Goods to Iraq. The arms embargo against Iraq remains in place under United Nations Security Council resolution 1483(2003), with the exception of "arms and other related material required by the (coalition provisional) authority to serve the purposes of this and other related resolutions". As this includes promoting the development of free and fair media, Her Majesty's Government consider it appropriate to grant exemptions for the export of body armour and helmets for use by media organisations working in Iraq. Such licences are issued with provisos that: items will be for the sole use by newsgathering staff and will remain under their control at all times, when in use or in storage and items must not be left in country or gifted to local organisations after newsgathering staff leave. The export is consistent with the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria. Future applications will continue to be assessed on a case by case basis against the UN Embargo and Consolidated Criteria, taking into account the circumstances prevailing at the time.

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 10 June 2004

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Indemnity Scheme

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport ssa Jowell): The provision for the Government emnity scheme is made by the National Heritage Act 0. The scheme facilitates public access to loans of rks of art and other objects for public display made museums, galleries and other such institutions by vate owners and non-national institutions. It does by indemnifying lenders against loss or damage to ir loan. Loans covered by the scheme must be for olic benefit. The scheme also covers loans of such ects for study purposes within borrowing institutions ere this would contribute materially to the public's derstanding or appreciation of the loan. Examples of s are enhancing interpretation or explanation to the olic of objects, or bringing into the public domain the nclusions of any study.

n the six month period ending 31 March, the lowing undertakings to indemnify were given under tion 16 by the relevant Departments for objects on n to national and non-national institutions. The partment for Culture, Media and Sport issued 687 dertakings, the Scottish Executive Education partment issued 179 undertakings and the National sembly for Wales issued 229.

The value of contingent liabilities in respect of undertakings given at any time under section 16 and which remained outstanding as of 31 March for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport are £3,177,492,071. The value of section 16 contingent liabilities as of 31 March for the Scottish Executive Education Department are £607,547,273 and £76,817,843 for the National Assembly for Wales.

The value of non-statutory Government indemnities to cover loans handled by the Government art collection and which remained outstanding as of 31 March are £4,975,000.

The value of non-statutory undertakings given to Her Majesty in respect of loans from the royal collection and which remained outstanding as of 31 March are £170,937,987.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Mainstreaming Gender

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Jack Straw): The FCO has today published a booklet entitled "Inclusive Government: Mainstreaming Gender into Foreign Policy", prepared by its Gender Advisory Group. Copies of this booklet have been placed in the Library of the House. From 23 June it will also be available on the FCO's website at www.fco.gov.uk.

Mainstreaming gender is about considering fully the impact on men and women of a particular policy, project or service, and taking steps to ensure that those impacts are positive for both sexes. Mainstreaming gender is crucial to the work of the FCO.

This booklet draws together the work the FCO is already doing on gender, and serves as a toolkit for FCO staff to mainstream gender more fully into their work. I hope it will help to ensure that the FCO can devise more effective policies, and make better use of resources, leading to positive outcomes for the UK.

Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 14 June 2004

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Mental Health and Social Exclusion

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Yvette Cooper): In spring 2003, my right hon. Friends the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister asked the social exclusion unit to consider what more could be done to reduce social exclusion among adults of working age with mental health problems. The unit has looked in particular at promoting employment and job retention, and improving social participation and access to services for this group.

Adults with mental health problems are one of the most excluded groups in society. Fewer than a quarter of adults with long-term mental health problems are in employment, despite many having aspirations to work. Too often people do not have other activities to fill their days and spend their time alone. Stigma and discrimination against people with mental health problems remain widespread, and can have a greater impact on the quality of people's lives than the mental health problems themselves.

Depression, anxiety and phobias can affect up to one in six of the population at any one time, with the highest rates in deprived neighbourhoods. Severe mental health problems, such as schizophrenia, are relatively rare affecting around one in 200 adults each year. The costs of mental health problems can be high, both to individuals and society as a whole. In addition to medical costs, lost opportunities to work can lead to a negative spiral of debt, reliance on benefits and housing instability. Early intervention to keep people in work and maintain social contacts can significantly reduce these costs.

The social exclusion unit report, "Mental Health and Social Exclusion", is published today. For the first time, action will be taken across Government to address the full range of issues affecting people with mental health problems. Rather than focusing solely on medical needs, it addresses stigma and discrimination, employment, education, housing, family needs and community participation. At national level, over 20 Government Departments, agencies and other national organisations will be involved in driving forward the report's action plan in six key areas:

stigma and discrimination—a sustained programme to challenge negative attitudes and promote awareness of people's rights;

the role of health and social care in tackling social exclusion—implementing evidence-based practice in vocational services and enabling reintegration into the community;

employment—giving people with mental health problems a real chance of sustained paid work reflecting their skills and experience;

taking part in the local community—enabling people to lead fulfilling lives the way they choose;

getting the basics right—access to decent homes, financial advice and transport;

and

making it happen—clear arrangements for leading this programme and maintaining momentum.

The SEU report builds on action already taken by the Government to improve services for people with mental health problems, including the modernisation of NHS mental health services, improved civil rights for disabled people and more support to help disabled people back to work. It draws on examples of local good practice, often led by an expert and innovative voluntary sector.

Creating sustainable, inclusive communities is about everyone having a stake. Being in work and having social contacts is strongly associated with improved health and well-being. People with mental health problems have much to offer. If they are able to fulfil their potential, the impact of mental health problems on individuals, their families and society can be significantly reduced.

A copy of the social exclusion unit report, "Mental Health and Social Exclusion" and a summary document are available in the Libraries of the House.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Gambling

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (Tessa Jowell): The Government have today published their response to the First Report of the Joint Committee on the Draft Gambling Bill. Copies have been laid before Parliament and also deposited in the Libraries of both Houses.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Regional State Aid Reform

The Minister for Industry and the Regions (Jacqui Smith): The European Commission has published proposals for amending the guidelines that govern regional state aid, which define assisted areas and aid intensities allowed within them for the period 1 January 2007 to 31 December 2013 and are seeking member states' views on their proposals. My Department will shortly be issuing a consultation document seeking the views of all interested parties on the Commission's proposals.

The Government remain committed to improving prosperity in all regions of the UK, and to reducing the gaps in growth rates between the regions and has introduced a range of measures to address regional disadvantage, such as measures to promote training to ensure that people in the region have the skills to fulfil the region's long-term economic strategy and to deal with the consequences of industrial change and measures to promote urban and rural regeneration.

The Government believe funding at EU level—the structural funds—should go to the poorest member states, where it will add most value. As these economies grow, so will prospects for UK exporters. The expansion

of the EU will create a market of 450 million customers opening up opportunities for commercial activity for businesses in every region. However, the Government consider that richer member states should have more scope to use their own funds to tackle the causes of underperformance.

The Commission explains that their objectives in reviewing the regional aid guidelines are to tackle market failures, promote entrepreneurship and ensure less and better targeted State aid. The Commission's aim is to allow a better concentration of regional aid to investment in the least favoured member states and regions, while increasing the flexibility for other member states and regions to pursue local development policies that address specific regional problems or opportunities. The Commission proposals would reduce the areas in which regional aid can be provided in nearly all of the longer-standing member states including the UK. The levels of aid that could be given would also be reduced. Their proposals would at the same time increase levels of aid for capital investment allowed to small and medium sized firms outside the assisted areas. Plans to provide a completely new instrument permitting quicker approval of certain types of aid considered being less distorting would also introduce greater flexibility to provide lower levels of aid outside the assisted areas. Further reviews of other State aid guidelines, such as those permitting aid for research and development are planned.

The Government support an effective state aid regime, since state aid can distort competition between firms, which can, in turn, limit business performance, prosperity, and quality for consumers. An effective state aid regime helps create a level playing field for business across the EU. At the same time, the state aid regime needs to be flexible and Governments must be able to tackle the causes of underperformance where they arise.

As already noted, investment aid is only one way in which the Government work with business in the regions; most business support schemes do not depend on the regional aid guidelines.

The horizontal rules on aid for SMEs, research and development, environmental aid, training and employment aid, risk and venture capital will continue to allow aid to be granted anywhere post-2006. The Commission have indicated that they are open to further proposals from member states in terms of greater flexibility under these "horizontal guidelines" and the consultation document seeks views on this issue.

Regional aid nevertheless remains an important tool. The Government therefore want to ensure that under the new regional aid guidelines, regional aid can still be granted in the areas where it is most needed to help address regional disparities and local deprivation. The present proposals from the Commission do not deliver this effectively as they do not adequately allow for disparities within regions, given that poor areas exist side by side with rich areas. The consultation document therefore seeks views on potential alternative methods for determining the assisted areas; aid intensity levels allowed within them; and how best to provide for a suitable level of flexibility to give aid outside the assisted areas where it is needed.

The Commission has asked for member states' comments by 1 July. However, the Government expect to continue discussions with the Commission on this issue into the autumn. The Government's consultation document therefore requests responses by Monday 6 September 2004 but notes that if it is possible for respondents to provide early responses (or initial comments) by Monday 28 June 2004 these will help inform the Government's formal response to the Commission proposals in July.

Copies of the full consultation document will be placed in the Libraries of the House and will also be available on the DTI website at

www.dti.gov.uk/ewt/stateaid.pdf and at

www.dti.gov.uk/consultations/stateaid.pdf

Cross-border Mergers

The Minister for Industry and the Regions (Jacqui Smith): I have today placed in the Libraries of the House copies of a consultation document entitled "European Company Law—Draft Directive on Cross-Border Mergers".

The cross-border mergers directive introduced by the European Commission will enable cross-border mergers between companies with share capital from different member states. The Government strongly supports the objective of agreeing a cross-border mergers directive and is committed to extending the opportunities for corporate restructuring across the EU as crucial to the single market.

This consultation explores a range of issues, such as which types of companies cross-border mergers should be available to, and its purpose is to seek business views with the aim of ensuring that the final directive offers a practical solution to the issues of cross-border restructuring for businesses within the EU—providing legal certainty whilst avoiding unnecessary burdens and constraints on business. The consultation period ends on 20 September 2004.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Council of the European Union

The Minister for Europe (Mr. Denis MacShane): The forthcoming business in the Council of the European Union is as follows:

Date	*Location*	*Event*
June		
14–15	Luxembourg	General Affairs & External Relations (GAERC) / IGC
17–18	Brussels	EUROPEAN COUNCIL / IGC
21–22	Luxembourg	Agriculture & Fisheries Council
21–22	Brussels	Meeting of the Economic and Financial Committee
25–26	Dromoland Castle, Co. Clare	EU-US Summit
28–29	Luxembourg	Council Meeting of EU Environment Ministers
July		
1	Brussels	Coreper 2
2–3	Maastricht	Competitiveness (Informal)
7	Brussels	Coreper 1
7–8	Brussels	Coreper 2
8	tbc	EU-Ukraine Summit
8–10	Maastricht	Social Policy (Informal)
9–10	Amsterdam	Transport (Informal)

Date	*Location*	*Event*
12–13	Brussels	General Affairs & External Relations (GAERC)
12–14	Rotterdam	Informal Ministerial Education Youth and Culture
14	Brussels	Coreper 1
15	Brussels	Coreper 2
16–18	Maastricht	Environment (Informal)
19	Brussels	JHA Council
19	Brussels	Agricultural and Fisheries Council
22	Brussels	Coreper 2
23	Brussels	Coreper 1
August		
No meetings planned		
September		
1	Brussels	Coreper 1
2	Brussels	Coreper 2
3–4	Maastricht	Gymnich
5–7	Noordwijk	Agriculture and Fisheries (Informal)
8	Brussels	Coreper 1
8	Brussels	Coreper 2
9–10	Noordwijk	Health (Informal)
11	Scheveningen	ECOFIN
13–14	Brussels	GAERC
15	Brussels	Coreper 1
16	Brussels	Coreper 2
17	Brussels	Coreper 1
17–18	Noordwijk	Informal Ministerial Defence
20–21	Brussels	Agriculture and Fisheries Council
22	Brussels	Coreper 1
22	Brussels	Coreper 2
24	Brussels	Competetiveness Council
27	Brussels	(Possible) Council Transport, Telecom and Energy
29	Brussels	Coreper 1
29	Brussels	Coreper 2
30	Den Haag	JHA (Informal)
October		
1	Den Haag	JHA (Informal)
1	Brussels	Coreper 1
4	Brussels	Employment, Social Policy, Health, Consumer Affairs Council
6	Brussels	Coreper 2
6	Brussels	Coreper 1
7	Hanoi	EU-South Korea Summit
7–8	Brussels	Transport, Telecom and Energy Council
7	Brussels	Coreper 2
8–9	Hanoi	ASEM Summit
11–12	Brussels	GAERC
13	Brussels	Coreper 1
14	Brussels	Environment Council
14	Brussels	Coreper 2
15	Brussels	Coreper 1
18–19	Brussels	Agriculture and Fisheries Council
19	Brussels	Coreper 2
20	Brussels	Coreper 1
19	Brussels	Coreper 2
22	Brussels	Coreper 1
25–26	Brussels	JHA Council
27	Maastricht	Informal Ministerial—Development
27	Brussels	Coreper 1
27–28	Brussels	Coreper 2
29	Brussels	Coreper 1
November		
2–3	Brussels	GAERC
5	tbc	European Council
9–11	Groningen	Informal Ministerial—Integration
9	Brussels	Coreper 2
10	Brussels	Coreper 1
10	Brussels	Coreper 2
12	Brussels	Employment, Social Policy, Health, Consumer Affairs Council
12	Brussels	Coreper 1
15–16	Brussels	Education, Youth, Culture Council
17	Brussels	Coreper 2
17	Brussels	Coreper 1
18	Brussels	Coreper 2
19–20	Rotterdam	Informal Ministerial—Transport, Telecom, Energy
19	Brussels	Coreper 1
22–23	Brussels	GAERC
22–23	Brussels	Agriculture and Fisheries Council
23	Brussels	Coreper 1
24	Brussels	Coreper 2
24	Brussels	Coreper 1
25–26	Brussels	Competitiveness Council
29	Brussels	Transport, Telecom and Energy Council
29–30	Rotterdam	Informal Ministerial—Urban Development

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 15 June 2004

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

School Inspection

The Minister for School Standards (Mr. David Miliband): I have today placed in the Library of the House copies of a new publication "A New Relationship with Schools". This document, produced jointly between DfES and Ofsted, follows the speech I made at the north of England education conference in January and sets out our intentions to simplify school improvement processes, reduce bureaucracy, and deliver an intelligent accountability framework. This new relationship will put a premium on ensuring effective and ongoing self-evaluation in every school combined with sharper edged, lighter touch, but no less rigorous external inspection. Ofsted consulted on the future of inspection proposals between 10 February and 8 April 2004. HMCI David Bell has now reached agreement with the Secretary of State for Education and Skills on the changes. The document sets out our intention, subject to the scrutiny and approval of Parliament, to change the inspection system with a range of complementary changes for schools. Based upon the responses to the consultation and the work with LEAs and schools, actively engaged as our partners, I have confidence that these changes will improve education for pupils and ensure parents and the public know even more about the schools their children attend.

New Relationship with Schools Proposals

The DfES is currently developing detailed proposals for a new relationship with schools, which cover a group of interlocking changes that will affect school inspection, schools' relations with local and central Government, schools' self-evaluation and planning, data collection from schools and communications with schools. They aim to reduce bureaucracy, strip out clutter, and release greater energy in schools.

Future of Inspection Proposals

The new inspection system will mean shorter and more frequent inspections at shorter notice than at present. The proposed framework would allow two to five working days' notice before an inspection instead of the current six to 10 weeks. There will be a greater emphasis on school self-evaluation and a simplified approach to schools causing concern. The current approach to schools that need special measures will be retained and a new improvement notice for other schools where there are weaknesses will be introduced.

In the trials of the new inspection process, the outcome has been a stronger link between school improvement and the reports produced by inspectors. Schools have welcomed the new system.

HMI will play a role in all inspections and inspection reports will be published within three weeks of an inspection, compared to four to five months at present. The proposals will reduce burdens on schools whilst ensuring that parents benefit from more frequent information about the quality and standard of education provided by schools. Overall the weight of inspection—with much sharper inspections, a smaller team, but at a greater frequency—will be roughly half the current weight.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Regional Planning Guidance (West Midlands)

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): Regional planning guidance 11 (RPG11) sets out the spatial strategy for the sustainable development of the region, with a framework for the land use aspects of housing and transport infrastructure and economic development. The strategy gives priority to the regeneration of the major urban areas and the regeneration zones identified in the regional economic strategy. RPG11 also sets out proposals for the conservation, management and enhancement of the region's natural and cultural environment.

I am pleased that the vision, objectives, and core strategy of RPG11 are largely as proposed in the draft RPG submitted by the West Midlands regional planning body (RPB) in November 2001. This reflects the effective partnership working which was led by the RPB and involved local authorities and a wide range of other stakeholders. Many of these stakeholders have continued to make valuable contributions through the consultation process. Many of the comments received through the consultations have made a very positive contribution to the strategy.

The West Midlands regional assembly, now the regional planning body, will continue to work with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure that RPG11 is effectively implemented, monitored, and reviewed.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Sewage Treatment Works (Nuisance Control)

The Minister for Rural Affairs and Local Environmental Quality (Alun Michael): On 23 December 2002 the Government published a consultation on proposals for the control of odour and other nuisances from sewage treatment works. This included an option for a voluntary code of practice.

Incidents of odour problems are relatively few compared with the number of sewage works throughout England and Wales, but when problems do occur they can have a significant and prolonged impact on local residents. For this reason an apparent lack of effective enforcement had to be addressed as a matter of urgency. The outcome of the consultation supports the use of the statutory nuisance regime to resolve such problems. I have today placed in the Libraries of both Houses a summary report of the responses to the consultation.

In addition the position has been clarified by a recent High Court judgment which confirms that odours from sewage treatment works can be considered as a statutory

nuisance within the terms of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. As a consequence, local authorities have both a duty to investigate such a problem and corresponding enforcement powers. This means that abatement notices can be used to resolve long-term problems of odour from sewage treatment works. An appeal against this ruling has now been withdrawn.

The consequence of the High Court decision is that we have a statutory tool to address sewage odour. The Government therefore propose to drop the reference to a "voluntary" code, a throwback from when the code was envisaged as an interim measure in the absence of a statutory regime. The code will equally address concerns raised within the responses to the consultation that the application of the statutory nuisance regime may lead to inconsistencies in its application and increased uncertainty for the sewage industry. Therefore, the Government are asking the sewage industry, its regulatory and professional bodies and organisations representing customers, the public and local authorities to co-operate in the production of a code of practice that will provide advice and guidance to support the successful resolution of odour problems from sewage treatment works. A draft code is to be the subject of full public consultation in summer 2004, and should be published by late 2004. Ofwat has indicated it will lend its weight to the code.

DEFENCE

Mrs. Hulme and the Pensions Ombudsman v. the MOD

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): I announced on 19 November, *Official Report*, columns 39–40WS that the Ministry of Defence would not seek leave to appeal to the House of Lords the Court of Appeal judgment in the case of Mrs. Hulme and the pensions ombudsman v. the MOD. I also announced that, as appropriate, the Department would review previous decisions on entitlement to pensions where death-in-service or injury that resulted in invaliding was due to service and where armed forces pension scheme administrators have previously not accepted war pension scheme decisions on attributability; that awards would be backdated; and that the Department would consider compensation to reflect the effect of inflation on the value of pensions over the period of non-payment.

I can now advise the House that those pensioners, widows, widowers or their estates who will receive back-dated pension benefits as a result of this judgment, will also receive interest on those payments. Where the error occurred within the last six years, the interest will be based on the scheme's usual formula of simple interest. Where the error occurred beyond six years, interest will be based on a formula using the rate of RPI plus 2 per cent. compounded. This is consistent with the formula used in compensating those who were affected by the armed forces pension scheme tax and related pension errors, which I announced to the House on 15 December 2003.

Work has begun on identifying the cases involved and we hope that back payments and interest will be paid within one year to those who were affected.

Defence Estates Corporate Plan

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): I have set out the following Key Targets for 2004–05 for Defence Estates, as set out in the Agency's Corporate Plan:

Key Target 1

To improve the condition of the defence estate for fitness for purpose and condition by:

Delivering 1,640 Single Living Accommodation Grade 1 bedspaces under Project SLAM, and reporting on the provision of 4,307 bedspaces delivered under parallel projects, and improving service families accommodation by delivering 500 upgraded properties.

Ensuring that at least 70 per cent. of MOD Sites of Special Scientific Interest in the UK meet the criteria for satisfactory condition.

Key Target 2

To provide an estate of the right size, by increasing the number of personnel on Core Sites by 4 per cent. by 31 March 2005, producing business cases to support the MOD Estate Rationalisation Plan by December 2004, and by achieving Accrued Estates Disposal Receipts of £661 million from 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2008, including £126 million from 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005.

Key Target 3

To improve customer satisfaction and service delivery, by decreasing customer dissatisfaction with Service Families Accommodation by a percentage point by 31 March 2005, compared to the outcome as at 31 March 2004.

Key Target 4

To implement key 2004–05 milestones for MOD estates change initiatives by achieving the contract award for the Housing Prime Contract by 31 July 2004 and the Regional Prime Contract (South-East) by 30 November 2004.

Key Target 5

To produce the necessary strategies and to establish target baselines in support of the DEFRA Sustainable Development In Government requirements.

Key Target 6

To integrate baseline information to inform the methodology for demonstrating value for money efficiencies from Prime Contracting, and to reduce the management margin of vacant housing to 10.7 percent by 31 March 2005.

I am placing a copy of the new Defence Estates Corporate Plan in the Library of the House.

Met Office Key Performance Target 2004–05

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): The chief executive of the Met Office is responsible for providing meteorological and related environmental services, including climate change prediction, to a wide range of customers, including the armed forces, Government Departments and local authorities, civil aviation, shipping, emergency services, media, commerce, industry and the general public. The Met Office also undertakes research related to meteorology and climate.

Over the last 12 months the Met Office completed the challenging relocation of its headquarters and operations centre from Bracknell to Exeter. It was one of the biggest moves of IT capability undertaken in Europe, with no interruption in output or customer service. Some 1,000 staff transferred to Exeter in a project that was completed on time, to budget and against quality standards set. The move to new premises supports new ways of working; and an advanced

technology and IT infrastructure, which will result in increased resilience and data reliability for the Met Office's customers.

To reflect the established strategy of investment and growth, the Met Office has adopted a new target relating to growth. A new target has also been included to ensure that the Met Office is prepared for the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 on 1 January 2005.

Previously the Met Office has had a target set against commercial contribution. This has become less relevant given that there is no longer a clear distinction between commercial work and public sector work. This target has therefore been discontinued.

Key target 1

To achieve an increase in value for the Numerical Weather Prediction Index (measuring forecasting skill) of at least 1.4 by 31 March 2005, from the level achieved at 31 March 2004.

Key target 2

To deliver an operating profit before strategic investments of at least £15.5 million in FY 2004–05, whilst making strategic investments of between £5.8 million and £6.8 million.

Key target 3

To achieve a return on capital employed of at least 3.5 per cent. in the FY 2004–05.

Key target 4

To achieve direct services growth in both Government and non-Government revenue of at least 4.1 per cent. in FY 2004–05 from the 2003–04 baseline, whilst maintaining direct services operating profit

Key target 5

To have in place, by 31 December 2004, basic procedures to answer requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and to review by 31 March 2005 the initial operation of the procedures to ensure that they are fit for purpose.

Key target 6

To develop, by March 2005, an efficiency measure which demonstrates the continuous improvement in value for money of the National Met Service (including the Public Met Service and relevant parts of the National Met Programme).

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

UK Gas Quality Exercise

The Minister for Energy, E-Commerce and Postal Services (Mr. Stephen Timms): On 8 January 2004, in a written ministerial statement, *Official Report*, columns 13–14WS, I launched the second phase of a three-phase strategy addressing the issue of future changes in the quality of gas imports to the United Kingdom. I can now inform the House that as part of this phase my officials have successfully let two separate research contracts to address specific technical aspects of the potential remedial measures being explored.

Phase 1 of the gas quality exercise, an independent scoping report commissioned by Government, was completed in November 2003. It confirmed that the Wobbe specification of certain anticipated gas imports to the UK is, before processing, likely to fall outside the current limits of the Health and Safety Executive's Gas Safety (Management) Regulations (GS(M)R). In light of the expected increase in the UK's dependence on imported gas I launched phase 2 to identify an appropriate policy response.

As stated in previous announcements, our broad policy options appear to be: the "default" option, to retain the current gas quality specifications, or to change the current specifications to more closely reflect the expected quality of future gas supply. Two separate research contracts have recently been let, under a competitive tendering process, to Advantica Limited, to address specific technical issues in connection with these two options. The first will identify the costs, benefits and risks of the options for processing future gas imports to ensure that they comply with existing quality specifications. The latter is the pilot for an exercise aimed at understanding the likely costs, benefits and risks of adapting the UK's gas appliance population to ensure continued safe operation under the delivery of gas with different quality specifications.

I can tell the House now that there is no question of the Government recommending to the HSC, who are responsible for the GS(M)R, to implement an early change in the UK's gas quality regulations. The effective choice, for consideration in due course when the results of the research exercises are apparent, is expected to be between recommending no change at all versus the option of making no immediate change but implementing transitional measures that would provide the flexibility to introduce a change in the gas quality specifications at a much later date, perhaps towards the end of the next decade.

My officials, together with HSE and Ofgem, will be working over the coming months to prepare the ground for a consultation exercise. Once this work is complete I shall make a further statement to the House.

This exercise has been developed by the DTI as a member of the sustainable energy policy network (SEPN), which is working to deliver the Energy White Paper "Our Energy Future—Creating a Low Carbon Economy".

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Safety Cameras

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Alistair Darling): An independent review of the first three years of the safety camera programme's operation 2000–01 to 2002–03, carried out by University College London and PA Consulting Group which I am publishing today, concluded that safety cameras significantly reduced speeding and collisions, and had cut deaths and serious injuries at camera sites by 40 per cent.

These findings are based on the large body of evidence now available from three years of the programme's operation, and the 24 police and local highway authority safety camera partnerships which were participating in the national scheme by 2002–03, covering around half of the police authority areas of England, Wales and Scotland.

I have placed a copy of the UCL—PA report in the Library. It will also be available on my Department's website.

The report contains details of each partnership's audited costs and receipts from fixed fines for 2002–03. I have also placed in the Library copies of the English and Welsh partnerships' responses to my Department earlier this year, confirming that they are operating in accordance with the rules and guidance for the programme.

The sole objective of safety cameras is to save lives and reduce injuries—as it has always been, since the previous Government provided for the use of cameras in the 1991 Road Traffic Act.

Road safety is a Government priority. Despite the UK having one of the best safety records among major countries, some 3,500 people are still killed and another 35,000 seriously injured each year on the roads. This level of deaths and injury is not acceptable, and excessive and inappropriate speed is a significant element in the problem. People who drive 25 per cent. faster than the average for a road have six times higher risk of collision. Excessive speed is a contributory factor in over a quarter of fatal collisions. Moreover, speed makes any collision worse, whatever its cause. Pedestrians hit by cars travelling at 20 mph have a 21.2 per cent. risk of being killed; a 20 per cent. risk at 30 mph; and a 90 per cent. risk of being killed at 40 mph.

Safety cameras have a key role in tackling the problem. They cannot be the only way of helping to reduce speed, but they do make a major contribution. The key findings of the UCL—PA report are that:

- there was a 40 per cent. reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured at camera sites ("KSI casualties"), over and above the UK's general downward trend in killed or seriously injured casualties.
- the percentage reduction equated to 870 fewer people per year being killed or seriously injured at the 24 camera sites—including 105 fewer deaths per year;
- within the overall reduction in killed or seriously injured casualties, there was a 35 per cent. reduction in pedestrians being killed or seriously injured;
- there was a 33 per cent. reduction in overall collisions involving personal injury at camera sites—fatal, serious or slight—("Personal Injury Collisions"—PICs), again over and above the general downward trend in PICs. This equated to 4,030 fewer PICs per year for the 24 Partnership areas;
- the benefit to society of the avoided deaths and injuries in 2002–03 was £221 million, based on the standard Government values for road injuries—over four times the £54 million resource cost of the programme in 2002–03;
- there was a 32 per cent. reduction in the number of vehicles breaking the speed limit at camera sites. Average vehicle speed across all new sites fell by 7 per cent. overall;
- there was a larger, 43 per cent. reduction in excessive speeding—vehicles doing 15 mph or more above the limit;
- there was a clear correlation between the level of speed reduction at sites, and the level of reduction in collisions and casualties;
- independent research showed a high level of public support for the use of cameras. 79 per cent. of people agreed with the statement "The use of safety cameras should be supported as a method of reducing casualties".

This evidence of the road safety benefits of safety cameras shows why local residents and pedestrians value them strongly, as hon. Members know from contact with constituents. The report also shows that the majority of motorists also support cameras. They too are threatened by thoughtless drivers who are prepared to ignore speed limits and go through red lights.

As well as the national results, the UCL—PA report also includes estimates for the percentage reduction in KSI casualties and PIC collisions for the individual partnership areas. As is to be expected, partnerships' figures vary—partly reflecting their different mix of urban and rural sites and different camera types. Also, collisions are by nature random events and their incidence varies from year to year. So the report should not be regarded as providing a "league table".

We already expect partnerships to keep their camera sites under review and up to date with changing local circumstances. My Department will give guidance to partnerships on particular issues to consider in preparing and submitting their operational cases for the period ahead—in particular looking at camera sites where a good safety record has been achieved, to assess whether they need to be retained for maintaining effective compliance, or whether the site can now be safely stood down—and also at sites where there appears to be a continuing problem of high numbers of collisions notwithstanding the use of cameras, and assessing whether further or different action should be taken, including for example road improvements or engineering measures, traffic calming measures, road safety education or information programmes. In making these assessments, we will of course expect partnerships to take account of the views of both local communities, and those of road users.

The UCL—PA report shows the high level of public support for safety cameras. An essential element in this is the availability of full information on camera sites. Partnerships provide a wide range of information, presented in a range of ways.

But hon. Members and others with an interest in the safety camera programme are also interested in being able to access core information, set out on a common basis, covering all partnerships' sites nationwide.

Earlier this year I asked my Department to review the operation of cameras at each site across each partnership area. Drawing on information provided by the partnerships, my Department has prepared tables covering each of the 35 partnerships in England and Wales now participating in the programme. Copies will be placed in the Library, and will be available on the Department's website. The tables provide information on the location of sites, the reason for their establishment, and summary "before and after" data on the numbers of people killed or seriously injured in collisions since the partnership joined the programme and up to 2002–03, including part-year data for sites which were established in the course of 2002–03. The tables will be updated each year.

In total for England and Wales, at the end of March 2004, there were 5,215 safety cameras, comprising:

- 2,364 fixed speed camera sites, at which cameras operate continuously or from time to time;
- 2,153 locations at which mobile speed cameras are deployed from time to time;
- 698 red light camera sites at which cameras operate continuously or from time to time.

These tables provide a full picture of the safety camera sites currently in operation. Hon. Members with questions about any camera in their constituency should contact the partnership concerned.

Around half of the camera sites listed in the tables had been established prior to partnerships joining the national programme, under the guidance issued in 1992, in Department of Transport Circular 1/92 "Use of Technology for Traffic Enforcement: Guidance on Deployment". This guidance did not set any quantified collision criteria, asking only that partnerships should

"have evidence that all additional cameras have been deployed in areas where historically there have been a high incidence of speed related collisions."

The Government did not regard this generalised guidance which we inherited as adequate, and we have progressively developed detailed rules, guidance and criteria for the setting up and operation of cameras under the national programme, as currently contained in the handbook of rules and guidance for the operation of the national road safety programme for England and Wales, 31 October 2003, a copy of which is in the Library.

Alongside setting the quantified criteria for site locations, the handbook of rules and guidance for the programme recognises the independent operational discretion which police forces must have to enforce the law, and provides also for "exception sites"—mainly "community concern" sites where there is evidence of speeding causing road safety concerns to local residents. The operation of exception sites is now subject to a maximum of 15 per cent. of a partnership's total "camera time". Exception sites do not require Government approval. But for information, the tables include fixed exception camera sites. Exception mobile sites are often temporary, and are not included in the tables. Information on exceptional sites is available from partnerships.

The rules on camera sites' visibility and conspicuity that the Government introduced in 2001 apply to all speed cameras, including exception sites. The police however need the discretion in exceptional circumstances to mount "covert" operations to deal with exceptional problems. The police advice that the use of this discretion is rare—fewer than 10 instances a year.

We encourage lower speed limits where these are appropriate in urban areas and in the vicinity of schools, including 20 mph zones, which have proved very successful in reducing collisions and injuries. For rural areas, the Government recommend that 30 mph should be the norm in villages. The current guidance to local authorities on local speed limits is being revised and updated, covering both urban and rural roads. We will consult road users and other stakeholders shortly on a revised circular advising on the setting of local speed limits.

Penalties need to fit the crime. There is a significant problem with people prepared to exceed limits seriously and recklessly. Following the review of road traffic penalties, we made a commitment to create an aggravated offence to deal with these people, with a new higher fixed penalty when the legislative opportunity arises. This reflects serious public concern.

At the same time, many drivers feel that the present fixed three point minimum penalty, laid down in primary legislation is not necessarily the most appropriate or effective way to deal with less severe speeding. We therefore propose that, when the opportunity arises, legislation will reduce the minimum penalty to two points, with the detailed provisions for the offences to which two point and higher penalties would apply to be set in statutory orders. These would be subject to both formal public consultation, and to affirmative resolution in Parliament, to ensure full discussion with motoring organisations, road safety groups and others with an interest.

Meantime, a number of police forces have been developing and offering drivers the option of speed awareness courses as an alternative to the formal legal processes, where this looks to be a more effective remedy. And at the national level, the Association of Chief Police Officers has announced that it is putting in place arrangements for a national programme for the use of speed awareness courses, which will ensure consistent and rigorous standards of courses. The Government welcome the police's wide thinking on the best way to achieve the result which everyone wants to see—that of drivers and riders with changed, safer and more considerate attitudes.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

British Indian Ocean Territory

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Bill Rammell): I would like to inform the House of developments in relation to the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT).

In 1965, prior to Mauritius achieving independence in 1968, and with the agreement of the Mauritius Council of Ministers, the islands of the Chagos Archipelago were detached from Mauritius to form part of the British Indian Ocean Territory. The territory was created to provide for the defence needs of both Britain and the United States of America. Subsequently, the plantations on which the population of the islands had depended for their livelihood were run down and closed; and the inhabitants—the Chagossians—were in due course relocated to Mauritius and Seychelles, from where they or their families originated. The vast majority of them automatically acquired Mauritian or Seychelles citizenship when those countries respectively achieved independence. In addition, the British Overseas Territories Act 2002 gave a large number of them British citizenship. This carries with it the right of abode in this country, which some of them have already taken up, and freedom of access to other EU countries. Following the relocation, Britain made £650,000 available for the express purpose of assisting resettlement. And in 1982 Britain made a further ex gratia payment of £4 million for the benefit of the Chagossian community in Mauritius.

In November 2000 the High Court in the UK held in judicial review proceedings that a provision of the territory's immigration law that had previously precluded the Chagossians from returning to the territory without a permit was invalid. In the

circumstances which then obtained, it was decided not to appeal against that ruling, and the immigration law was amended to reflect it.

Following the departure of the Chagossians in the late 60s and early 70s, the economic conditions and infrastructure that had supported the community of plantation workers ceased to exist. While the judicial review proceedings were still pending, the Government therefore commissioned a feasibility study by independent experts to examine and report on the prospects for re-establishing a viable community in the outer islands of the territory. The latest report of the study was delivered after the November 2000 judgment and it was then placed in the Library of the House. It concluded that

> "... whilst it may be feasible to resettle the islands in the short-term, the costs of maintaining long-term inhabitation are likely to be prohibitive. Even in the short-term, natural events such as periodic flooding from storms and seismic activity are likely to make life difficult for a resettled population... Human interference within the atolls, however well managed, is likely to exacerbate stress on the marine and terrestrial environment and will accelerate the effects of global warming. Thus resettlement is likely to become less feasible over time."

Specifically with reference to climate change, the report advised that

> "... the main issue facing a resettled population on the low-lying islands will be flooding events, which are likely to increase in periodicity and intensity and will not only threaten infrastructure, but also the freshwater aquifers and agricultural production. Severe events may even threaten life."

The report also highlighted the implications for resettlement on such low-lying islands of the predicted increase in global sea levels as a result of climate change.

In effect, therefore, anything other than short-term resettlement on a purely subsistence basis would be highly precarious and would involve expensive underwriting by the UK Government for an open-ended period—probably permanently. Accordingly, the Government consider that there would be no purpose in commissioning any further study into the feasibility of resettlement; and that it would be impossible for the Government to promote or even permit resettlement to take place. After long and careful consideration, we have therefore decided to legislate to prevent it.

Equally, restoration of full immigration control over the entire territory is necessary to ensure and maintain the availability and effective use of the territory for defence purposes, for which it was in fact constituted and set aside in accordance with the UK's treaty obligations entered into almost 40 years ago. Especially in the light of recent developments in the international security climate since the November 2000 judgment, this is a factor to which due weight has had to be given.

It was for these reasons that on 10 June 2004 Her Majesty made two Orders in Council, the combined effect of which is to restore full immigration control over all the islands of the British Indian Ocean Territory. These controls extend to all persons, including members of the Chagossian community.

The first of these two orders replaces the existing constitution of the territory and makes clear, as a principle of the constitution, that no person has the right of abode in the territory or has unrestricted access to any part of it. The second order replaces the existing immigration ordinance of the territory and contains the detailed provisions giving effect to that principle and setting out the necessary immigration controls. These two orders restore the legal position to what it had been understood to be before the High Court decision of 3 November 2000. I am arranging for copies of the orders to be placed in the Library of the House.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

British Soldiers (Prosecution)

The Solicitor-General (Ms Harriet Harman): My right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General has made the following ministerial statement, 14 June 2004, *Official Report, House of Lords*, columns WS 22–24:

"This statement concerns the current position in relation to prosecution of soldiers and offences involving Iraqi civilians.

Soldiers and reservists serving in Iraq, and indeed all members of the armed forces, are subject to military law which lays down that they are liable to be tried by a court martial for an offence contrary to English criminal law. If soldiers do something outside the UK that would be a crime here, they commit a crime under military law. The English criminal courts have concurrent jurisdiction over certain offences, including war crimes, torture and unlawful killing abroad.

Investigations of offences alleged to have been carried out by service personnel are undertaken by the Royal Military Police or other service police authority. In the case of the Army, following an investigation the matter will be referred to the soldier's commanding officer who will also receive advice from the Army legal services branch which will include a draft charge. The commanding officer may decide to dismiss the charge; refer the charge to higher authority; deal summarily with the charge (if it is within the CO's jurisdiction); or stay proceedings with a view to them being otherwise dealt with, for example, by referring them to the civil authorities. The higher authority may in turn then refer the case to the Army prosecuting authority. Then the Army prosecuting authority becomes involved.

The Army prosecuting authority was established under the Armed Forces Act 1996 and came into existence on 1 April 1997. It acts independently of the military chain of command. It is subject to the general superintendence of the Attorney General. I have held regular meetings with the APA as part of that superintendence. Recently I and the Solicitor-General met with the APA in London and I and LSLO officials met with the APA in Germany.

If the APA decides there is sufficient evidence for the case to proceed (and it is in the public interest to proceed), they will then decide whether there should be a district court martial (a Judge Advocate and three military members with a sentencing limit of two years imprisonment) or a general court martial (a Judge Advocate and five members but with no sentencing limits save that imposed by statute). The court martial system was established under the Army Act 1955 and is the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Defence. The APA conducts prosecutions in courts martial and the normal rules of procedure and evidence apply.

The verdict is returned by the military members of the court martial and the sentence is decided by the military members and the Judge Advocate together.

Appeal against sentence or conviction is to the court martial appeal court comprised of judges of the Court of Appeal sitting in the royal courts of justice.

Courts martial sit in public and are subject to the same rules on reporting as civilian criminal courts. Thus the Contempt of Court Act 1981 applies whether the court martial is sitting outside the UK or not. The common law contempt of court also applies to courts martial.

In his recent statement, 8 June 2004, *Official Report, House of Commons,* columns WS 4–5, my right hon. Friend, the Minister for the Armed Forces (Mr Ingram) referred to 75 cases being investigated into civilian deaths, injuries or alleged ill treatment of Iraqi civilians. Of those four cases have been referred to the APA which involve Iraqi victims.

I have more details about one case, involving four defendants, referred to the APA which is detailed below. In relation to the remaining three cases with the APA, they are actively being considered at the moment.

The APA is aware of at least four other cases which are likely to be referred to them in the very near future. This will make a total of eight cases out of the 75 which have been referred to them.

As I have previously announced, there is in addition a further case which was brought to my attention by the APA but which had not been formally referred to the APA. It concerns an alleged unlawful killing of an Iraqi in the course of an arrest. This case was brought to my attention after charges were dismissed by the soldier's commanding officer. This means the case cannot be tried by court-martial, but I have referred it to the CPS who have asked the Metropolitan police for assistance in collecting further evidence. Any decision in relation to this prosecution will be taken by the CPS in accordance with the code for Crown prosecutors.

The APA directed trial on 11 June 2004 against four soldiers from the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers on charges relating to alleged abuses of Iraqi civilians. The charges against the four include assault, indecent assault which apparently involves making the victims engage in sexual activity between themselves, and a military charge of prejudicing good order and military discipline. This case has previously been referred to in the press. The case concerns conduct alleged to have occurred whilst the civilians were being temporarily detained, but not in a prison or detention facility. It involves photographic evidence developed in this country and referred to the UK police. A date for the trial has yet to be set by the military court service. Any trial will be held in public.

As and when any further charges are laid against soldiers arising from incidents in Iraq I will inform the House of these charges by way of written statement and give all the information it is appropriate to give in advance of any hearing.

To assist the House further I have made arrangements for three papers to be placed in the House Library. These deal with *(a)* procedures in relation to courts martial, *(b)* the contempt rules and how they apply to courts martial and *(c)* my Ministerial superintendence of the Army Prosecuting Authority."

Three of the four soldiers accused were informed of the charges against them on 14 June. I can therefore confirm that their names are: Corporal Daniel Kenyon; Fusilier Gary Paul Bartlam; and Lance Corporal Mark Paul Cooley and that the charges relate to incidents which allegedly took place on or about 15 May 2003 in a camp just to the west of Basra.

The Attorney-General will give the name of the fourth soldier by written answer once they have been informed of the charges against them.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 16 June 2004

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Pesticide Spraying

The Minister for Rural Affairs and Local Environmental Quality (Alun Michael): I have now completed a detailed consideration of the outcome of two consultation exercises regarding the introduction of buffer zones and information on pesticide use. As a result I would like to announce a number of measures designed to provide additional reassurance about the pesticide regulatory process, and to improve public access to information about pesticides used.

First I would like to announce that the royal commission on environmental pollution has agreed to my request to carry out a special study to examine the scientific evidence on which DEFRA has based its decisions on the risks to people from pesticide exposure.

I requested this study following a detailed evaluation of the responses made to the two public consultations launched on 21 July 2003, which sought views on the introduction of buffer zones around residential properties near farms, and how residents can best be informed of the pesticides that are being sprayed.

My number one priority has always been to ensure that the safety arrangements we have in place for pesticides do the job of protecting the public. The independent scientific advice I have received, both from the independent Advisory Committee on Pesticides and DEFRA's chief scientific adviser, is very clear that the existing system provides full reassurance. I am confident that no new scientific evidence has come to light that would provide a safety based justification for buffer zones, and I have therefore decided against their introduction around agricultural land.

Nevertheless the responses to the consultations demonstrate that there is a perception that the current arrangements, and in particular the assessment of risks, are inadequate. I have listened to the concerns of campaigners who hold strong views about how crop spraying has affected their health. Their views are undoubtedly sincerely held and although no new scientific evidence was produced to support their case, I believe the time is now right for a fresh and independent appraisal of the science. This is why I have asked the royal commission to examine the scientific evidence on which the regulatory system is based. The commission will be free to take a new and independent approach to the question. Further details about the scope and management of the royal commission's study will be released in due course.

I have also decided to introduce new legal measures requiring farmers and growers to keep records of pesticides used on crops and to make those records available to the public via a third party. Officials are contacting general practitioners' and lawyers' representatives and those for community health councils to explore whether they would act as third party representatives in such cases. These measures are at the early stage of development, and will require changes to existing pesticide regulations to put them into effect. I will bring forward proposals for parliamentary consideration at the earliest opportunity.

In parallel, a pilot study will be set up to explore how residents living next to farms can be notified in advance of pesticide use. The study will look at the practicality and cost of various options for how notification can take place. Officials are working on the terms of reference for the study and further details will be published as soon as practical.

These measures are in addition to a biomonitoring study already being arranged to look at the effect of pesticides in the air. There is also an on-going study, co-ordinated by the working group on risk assessment of mixtures of pesticides (WIGRAMP) into the effect of numbers of pesticides used in combination.

I also intend to invite key stakeholders to a meeting in the near future to explain the reasoning behind the decisions made.

DEFENCE

Defence Vetting Agency

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): The business review of the defence vetting process has been completed. The review team has made a number of recommendations and observations, which Director General (security and safety) has agreed and endorsed, and as the senior responsible officer will oversee the implementation strategy.

The key findings of the review are that the rationalisation of the former defence vetting organisations has been successful, providing both economies and efficiencies in the vetting process and offering opportunities for further performance enhancement and business expansion. The Defence Vetting Agency (DVA) has achieved the prime aim required by its framework document and become an integrated and cohesive organisation. Standardised procedures for defence vetting have been adopted by the agency, which has successfully consolidated the majority of the disparate processes previously used within the separate service vetting organisations. The organisation is correctly sized to deliver its required output and over the period 1997–98 to 2002–03 has reduced its net operating costs from £11 million to £9.6 million, with the staff component reducing by £1.8 million.

The review also concluded that the DVA should remain a defence agency and, as the largest UK vetting organisation, is well placed to extend its services to a wider range of other Government Departments, if required.

I have arranged for copies of the report of the business review to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Key targets have now been set for the chief executive of the DVA for the financial year 2004–05. Building upon the progress made since it formed in 1997, these incremental targets will help the agency to become much

more responsive to its customers, and be well placed to move towards carrying out security clearances more quickly, without any loss of quality.

Quality

KEY TARGET 1:

Through external validation, achieve at least a 95 per cent. success rating with specially selected cases, and achieve zero serious errors that should have been identified at the time of vetting.

KEY TARGET 2:

To complete 33 per cent. of the three-year security check and developed vetting backlog review programme.

Timeliness

KEY TARGET 3:

To improve the completion time of routine cases to:

(a) 62 per cent. of counter terrorist checks completed within 30 calendar days.

(b) 65 per cent. of security checks completed within 30 calendar days.

(c) 50 per cent. of developed vetting completed within 100 calendar days.

KEY TARGET 4:

To improve the completion time of priority cases to:

(a) 45 per cent. of priority counter terrorist and security check cases completed within 10 calendar days.

(b) 90 per cent. of priority developed vetting completed within 30 calendar days.

KEY TARGET 5:

To achieve average completion times of:

(a) 30 calendar days for counter terrorist checks.

(b) 30 calendar days for security checks.

(c) 100 calendar days for developed vetting.

Efficiency

KEY TARGET 6:

To reduce the unit cost of output by 2 per cent.

I have arranged for advance copies of the DVA corporate plan to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Desulphurisation Plant (Aberthaw Power Station)

The Minister for Energy, E-Commerce and Postal Services (Mr. Stephen Timms): I have today granted consent under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 to RWE Innogy plc for the construction of a flue gas desulphurisation plant at the 1,500 MW coal-fired power station at Aberthaw in the Vale of Glamorgan. Planning permission for the plant has also been deemed to be granted, subject to 29 planning conditions agreed with the Vale of Glamorgan council.

Copies of the press notice and decision letter are being placed in the Library of the House.

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 17 June 2004

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Planning System

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): The Government is continuing to take forward a major programme of reform to the planning system to support its drive to create sustainable communities, promote sustainable development and achieve a better balance of housing supply and demand. Our goal is positive planning to achieve these objectives. Our programme was launched in the planning Green Paper of December 2001 and the Government's policy statement on planning reform of July 2002 "Sustainable Communities—Delivering through Planning".

The Barker and Egan reports have endorsed the Government's vision for a reformed planning system and the work we are doing to achieve this. We will be setting out how we intend to take forward the agenda of those two reports later in the summer.

Local planning authority performance:

We are making good progress towards the planning reform targets we have set. In particular, we have seen in the last six months the best improvement in a decade in the time which local authorities take to deal with planning applications. Since we published the planning Green Paper in December 2001, the proportions of local authorities achieving the targets for handling major commercial and residential applications has increased from 24 per cent. in January to March 2002 to 41 per cent. in January to March 2004. Handling performance on minor commercial and residential planning applications, as well as on other (mainly householder) applications have each doubled over this period. Furthermore, we have achieved our public service agreement target to halve the time it takes the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to deal with called in cases and recovered appeals from close of inquiry to decision—in the quarter January—March 2004, 80 per cent. of the cases were dealt with in 16 weeks compared with 32 weeks.

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act received Royal Assent on 13 May. The Act puts in place a new statutory framework for regional planning and a reformed, more flexible local planning system which puts community involvement at the heart of the process.

The Act sets a statutory objective for plans—to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It makes a number of reforms to development control to speed and improve the quality of decision making. Local development orders can be used to permit development that is acceptable at local level. There are new requirements for design and access statements to improve the design quality of new development; new processes for handling major infrastructure projects more effectively; requirements for statutory consultees to respond within a certain period; a shorter period of three years as the default for implementation of planning permission and consent; and simplified planning zones.

We have removed crown immunity from planning controls and we will be consulting on the secondary legislation required to make the new arrangements work and we have made a number of reforms to the compulsory purchase order system.

To support the Act we will be introducing new regulations and guidance in the summer and later in the year. This will include guidance on the new processes for regional and local planning and sustainability appraisal.

We are working with our newly formed Ministerial stakeholder advisory group and others to take forward reforms to the planning obligations systems. I am announcing separately today our timetable for taking forward the reforms.

Compulsory purchase reforms

We are pushing ahead with proposals for reform of the compulsory purchase system. Besides the reforms in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, we have uprated the thresholds setting the levels of home loss compensation payable to owner-occupiers and tenants whose property is compulsorily acquired, and are committed to reviewing these thresholds annually. We are also currently reviewing the results of consultation on proposals to revise and update the Crichel Down rules governing the disposal of surplus land acquired under compulsory purchase powers and expect to issue a circular containing the revised rules in the summer. We have recently started consulting on proposals to revise the compulsory purchase order circular on how acquiring authorities can exercise their powers is in line with the new provisions in the 2004 Act, and on the secondary legislation to implement the compulsory purchase order provisions in the Act. The Law Commission published their final report on compensation in December 2003 and will be publishing their final report on procedures later in 2004.

Planning policies

I am today responding to the recommendation of the ODPM Select Committee about our programme of revising planning policy guidance. We will be focusing our efforts on the most important planning policies.

Resourcing and supporting local planning authorities

Our reform agenda covers more than legislation and policy change, however. We are making substantial additional resources available to local planning authorities to enable them to respond to the changes and to drive performance improvement. We have paid out the second tranche of the £350 million planning delivery grant which rewards performance by local planning authorities; £130 million was allocated for 2004–05 against criteria covering both plan making and development control.

We have set performance standards for authorities with poor records of handling planning applications, of which there are 81 in 2004–05. We have introduced two new best value indicators that will allow comparison of the quality of planning services, replacing two existing indicators. The comprehensive performance assessment of district authorities is assessing strategies for balanced

housing markets and public space. The assessments of unitary and county authorities are being brought up to date. Both sets of assessments provide a context in which to address performance improvement.

We are providing practical help and advice to support improvement. We have announced that the planning advisory service, to be hosted by the Improvement Development Agency, will be open for business in the autumn. We are continuing to develop the planning portal and other e-planning initiatives. We are providing financial assistance to planning aid.

Changing the culture of planning

We are engaged in a programme for changing the culture of planning. We have put sustainable development at the heart of planning through the statutory objective in the Act and in PPS1. PPS1 emphasises that planning is a positive, proactive process. It sets out principles for community involvement in planning.

As part of the skills agenda set out by the Egan report, we recently launched a new bursaries scheme to fund 144 awards for students who wish to undertake RTPI accredited one year post graduate planning courses and we will be working with stakeholders over the coming months on communicating the importance of planning, including new guides to the planning system for the general public and for business.

We set out a road map at the end of 2001 for a reformed planning system. We have come a long way since then, as this statement shows. The Government remains committed to an efficient, effective transparent and accountable system which delivers sustainable development. We will continue to drive forward the reforms and culture change to make this happen.

Planning Obligations

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): In the light of the report of the Barker review of housing supply, *Delivering stability: Securing our future housing needs*, published on 17 March, the Government has reviewed its plans for taking forward the reform of planning obligations foreshadowed in the consultation paper, *Contributing to Sustainable Communities; a new approach to planning obligations*, published in November 2003.

The Government proposed in its November 2003 consultation paper a number of measures aimed at improving the current negotiating arrangements under s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (amended by the 1991 Act), and a new optional planning charge. Sections 46 and 47 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 provide powers to make regulations to implement changes to the planning obligations system.

Separately, the Barker report recommended that the Government should introduce a planning-gain supplement (PGS) tied to the granting of planning permission so that part of landowner development gains could contribute to wider benefits for the community. It also recommended that, if the Government were minded to do this, planning obligations should be

"scaled back to cover direct impacts and mitigation along with affordable and social housing requirements".

The Government agreed that it was in principle acceptable to fund social housing and other measures out of the uplift in land values associated with the development process and the Chancellor of the Exchequer said in the Budget report of 17 March 2004 that he would consider proposals for a national PGS and make a decision by the end of 2005.

Against this background the Government now proposes to take matters forward as follows.

The Government will press ahead with identifying and implementing changes to the current arrangements for negotiated agreements. It will do this by revising the current circular 1/97 on planning obligations and publishing good practice guidance for local authorities and developers. The aim is to issue a draft revised circular for consultation in autumn 2004 with a view to putting the new arrangements in place early in 2005.

The Government will continue to work up proposals in parallel for an optional planning charge, on a timetable consistent with that for decisions on the PGS. During this process, the Government will also encourage a number of local authorities to pilot options for charging by local authorities.

In developing all these proposals we will work closely with our stakeholders, including my advisory group on planning obligations the membership of which is drawn from the major planning, housing, developer, voluntary sector and local authority interests.

Planning Policy Statements

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): In its report on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Annual Report 2003 the ODPM Select Committee gave consideration to the programme for replacing planning policy guidance notes, which set out national policies on issues such as planning for housing, transport etc., by more succinct planning policy statements. The Committee recommended (para 25):

> "The failure to deliver on commitments to reform the planning system by issuing revised guidance notes, has led to uncertainty and delays in planning decisions because of impending revisions to policies. We recommend that the Department redoubles its effort to complete the revision of national planning policy, and supporting good practice advice, where necessary, by July 2005. The ODPM would do well formally to withdraw its stated intention to revise the less controversial PPG notes."

An interim response was included in the Government response to the Select Committee's report (Command 6141) published in February 2004. This listed the consultations on reviews of PPGs that were already in hand or planned but indicated that a further announcement would be made on other PPGs. A complete list of planning policy guidance notes is tabled below.

The ODPM is concerned to complete the early updating and revision of policy in those PPGs where this is required for good policy reasons. It is equally concerned that the process of policy review should not cause undue disruption to the programme for local authorities to put in place the first round of new local development documents following commencement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, which received Royal Assent on 13 May 2004.

The ODPM will therefore treat as a priority the review of the following PPGs: PPG1 (General Policies and Principles), PPG3 (Housing), PPG4 (Economic Development), PPG6 (Town Centres), PPG7 (Countryside), PPG9 (Nature Conservation/ Biodiversity), PPG10 (Planning and Waste Management), PPG11 (Regional Planning), PPG12 (Development Plans), PPG 22 (Renewable Energy), PPG 23 (Planning and Pollution) and PPG25 (Development and Flood Risk). Consultation has already taken place or is currently underway on several of these documents. The revision, or replacement as PPSs, of these PPGs will be completed by early 2005. Any further revisions to PPG3 (Housing) to take account of the recommendations of the Barker review of housing supply will be completed later in 2005.

The review and replacement of other planning policy guidance notes will only take place as and when necessary in the light of their policy and strategic significance. In the meantime the current PPG will remain in place.

PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE NOTES

1 General Policy and Principles
2 Green Belts
3 Housing
4 Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms
5 Simplified Planning Zones
6 Town Centres and Retail Development
7 The Countryside—Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development
8 Telecommunications
9 Nature Conservation/Biodiversity
10 Planning and Waste Management
11 Regional Planning
12 Development Plans
13 Transport
14 Development on Unstable Land
15 Planning and the Historic Environment
16 Archaeology and Planning
17 Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation
18 Enforcing Planning Control
19 Outdoor Advertisement Control
20 Coastal Planning
21 Tourism
22 Renewable Energy
23 Planning and Pollution
24 Planning and Noise
25 Planning and Flood Risk

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act received Royal Assent on 13 May. The Government intends to bring the provisions of the Act into force over the coming months through a series of commencement orders. It is the convention that no part of an Act should be brought into effect earlier than two months after Royal Assent other than in exceptional circumstances.

The Act contains a number of powers enabling the Secretary of State to make subordinate legislation such as regulations or orders. The first commencement order will bring the enabling powers to make subordinate legislation into effect, and it is intended that this order will be made in the second half of July. Subordinate legislation will then be made. Our general approach is to bring substantive provisions of the Act relating to England into force by further commencement orders, which will take effect at the same time as the relevant regulations or orders.

The following table sets out an indicative timetable for these commencement orders:

Provisions	*Commencement Date*
Regional Planning (Part 1)	September 2004 (together with associated regulations and PPS 11)
Local Planning (Part 2)	September 2004 (together with associated regulations and PPS 12)
Development Plan and Sustainable Development (Part 3)	September 2004
Development Control (Part 4)	A number of these provisions are dependent on new regulations or changes to the General Development Procedure Order. Where that is the case and the draft regulations or GDPO changes have already been subject to consultation, provisions are expected to be brought into effect in September 2004. Where the regulations or GDPO changes have not yet been subject to consultation, that will take place in the autumn and the provisions are expected to come into effect in early 2005. Regulations on planning obligations will not be made until early 2006.
Slip Rule	September 2004
Crown Immunity (Part 7, Chapter 1)	End 2005
Compulsory Purchase (Part 8)	End October 2004

The National Assembly for Wales is responsible for the commencement order for part 6 of the Act.

Scottish Ministers are responsible for the commencement order for chapter 2 of part 7.

The provisions in part 9 (Miscellaneous) and the schedules will be brought into effect on the same date as the substantive provisions to which they relate.

English Indices of Deprivation 2004

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Yvette Cooper): Today I am publishing revised tables for the Indices of Deprivation 2004. The index is based on a total of 37 indicators and the tables published on 28 April contained errors.

IMD 2004 is a major improvement on previous deprivation indices, introducing two new domains—crime and living environment—and a very significant new small area geography—super output areas. It makes available a much better evidence base to improve policy making and delivery at all levels. But these improvements make it a much more complex index to produce. Despite a long and very detailed period of consultation, and extensive pre-publication checks, there have been some teething troubles. I very much regret that these errors have occurred.

The errors occurred in creating the two new domains in the index—living environment and crime. In the former, one set of data was input in the wrong rank order. In the latter, there was a technical error in the way

in which the data were smoothed to deal with inaccuracies introduced by small numbers of particular crimes.

These errors have now been corrected, and very extensive checks have been made both by the contractors, and at the request of Ministers by independent experts, to ensure as far as possible there are no further such errors in the index. I have placed revised tables in the Library.

The revised tables show changes in the rankings both of individual local authorities, and of the new small super output areas. The most significant of these is that Ashfield has moved out of the list of authorities which are in the top 50 on at least one of the district level measures in the index, while Hammersmith and Fulham rejoins that list.

The new tables are also being placed being on the Department's website.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

British Energy plc (State Aids)

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Ms Patricia Hewitt): The Government were expecting to receive a decision from the European Commission in summer 2004 on the Government's proposed restructuring aid to British Energy plc. Receipt of a positive decision is a condition of the proposed restructuring of the company.

Due to the need to complete final assessments in relation to the financing of the company post-restructuring, it will now not be possible for the Government to present all the necessary information to the commission in time to enable the commission to take a decision before its summer break. Consequently, I now expect the commission to take a decision in autumn 2004.

British Energy continues to make progress on its restructuring, which remains subject to a number of significant uncertainties and important conditions. As I have said previously, the Government's contingency plans to fund the administration of the company should any of the restructuring conditions not be met or the restructuring fail for any other reason will, therefore, remain in place.

Estate Agents

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Mr. Gerry Sutcliffe): I aimed to publish the Government's response to the Office of Fair Trading report on the estate agency market in England and Wales by 18 June, but we have received a number of recent representations on the report that we are still considering. I expect the response to be published shortly.

Chemical Weapons Act

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Nigel Griffiths): I am pleased to announce that in accordance with the requirements of the Chemical Weapons Act 1996, I have today laid a report before the House on its operation during 2003.

WORK AND PENSIONS

New Deal

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Andrew Smith): I have today published a paper "Building on New Deal: Local solutions meeting individual needs" which provides details of our strategy for building on the success of our employment programmes. A copy has been placed in the Library and copies are available for hon. Members from the Vote Office. This follows the publication of our preliminary paper on the 19 May.

The UK employment rate is now the highest in the G7, and the unemployment rate the lowest. Employment has risen in every region of the UK, and risen more in areas that previously had the lowest employment rates. The number of unemployed people has fallen by over 600,000 on both measures since 1997 to its lowest level for over a quarter of a century.

This success reflects a comprehensive economic strategy that the Government has put into place since 1997. At the heart of this success has been our welfare to work policies such as the new deal programmes, which have helped well over a million people to find work.

We have achieved significant falls in unemployment and rises in the employment levels of lone parents and older workers. But we are determined to do even more for those who face the most difficult barriers to work. We will build upon the success of the new deal, strengthening its ability to help people who face particular difficulties in moving into employment. This requires a personalised approach where personal advisers and local managers are given sufficient flexibility to deliver solutions appropriate for individuals and local labour markets. This strategy builds on existing policies to secure social justice for those who too often have been left behind, and to enable them to realise their full potential, to the economic and social benefit of the whole community and to achieve the goal of full employment in every region and nation of the UK.

We will be working with the devolved administrations, our private and voluntary sector partners and other organisations to successfully deliver this new approach and help even more people to move from benefit dependency into work.

DEFENCE

Iraq: UK Forces in Multinational Division (South-East)

The Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Geoffrey Hoon): As part of the routine management of UK forces in the Multinational Division (South-East) (MND(SE)) in Iraq, we intend to conduct a further roulement over the coming months. The lead UK formation, currently 1 Mechanised Brigade, will be provided by 4 Armoured

Brigade from October 2004. In addition to 4 Armoured Brigade's Headquarters and Signals squadron, we plan to replace the major units currently in Iraq as follows:

Unit deploying	*Unit currently in theatre*
4 Armoured Brigade Headquarters and Signal Squadron	1 Mechanised Brigade Headquarters and Signal Squadron
1st the Queen's Dragoon Guards	The Household Cavalry Regiment
The Royal Dragoon Guards	The Queens Royal Lancers
4th Regiment the Royal Artillery	1st Regiment Royal Horse Artillery
1st Battalion the Scots Guards	1st Battalion the Princess of Wales' Royal Regiment
1st Battalion the Welsh Guards	1st Battalion the Royal Welch Fusiliers
1st Battalion the Duke of Wellington's Regiment	1st Battalion the Cheshire Regiment
21 Engineer Regiment	22 Engineer Regiment

This process of roulement is currently planned to take place over the period from mid-October to mid-November. We expect that 4 Armoured Brigade Headquarters will assume authority in early November. We expect that the number of armed forces personnel in theatre will remain broadly stable as a result of these changes.

In my statement on 27 May 2004, Official Report, column 1725, I announced that we were reducing the notice to move of 40 Commando the Royal Marines, in case it proved necessary to deploy it to help continue the work currently carried out by the two surge battalions, the 1st Battalion the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and the 1st Battalion the Royal Highland Fusiliers. These battalions have carried out much impressive work, particularly in developing Iraqi security forces. However, the General Officer Commanding has concluded that there will be a continuing requirement for some surge capability in MND(SE), both to provide support to Iraqi security forces in the early stages of the transitional period, and to provide capacity for some other tasks, including the protection of essential infrastructure over the summer period.

As I announced in that statement, the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders will complete their six-month tour in July. Three companies of the Royal Highland Fusiliers were originally deployed for a three-month tour to mid-July (the other company forms the Falkland Island Roulement Infantry Company). We have concluded that we should not extend their tour in Iraq any further. On the advice of the General Officer Commanding, therefore, I have decided that 40 Commando should deploy to replace the Royal Highland Fusiliers. Because all four companies of 40 Commando will deploy to Iraq there will be a net increase of approximately 270 personnel in theatre, which will bring the total to around 9,200. We envisage that deployment will begin on 21 June in order to complete the handover in mid-July.

As part of the roulement from 1 Mechanised Brigade to 4 Armoured Brigade, and in line with our policy of employing the reserves as an integral component of the armed forces, we shall shortly begin mobilising a further tranche of approximately 750 reservists to support operations in Iraq, with a view to deployment from mid-October onwards. This is a smaller deployment than previously required for Op TELIC. We currently have some 1,400 Army reservists carrying out a range of activities including medical support, force protection duties and providing individual reinforcements to units. We anticipate that most of these tasks will continue but the reduction in the number of individual reinforcements required and the replacement of the Reserve Field Hospital with one staffed by Regular soldiers will reduce the total Reserve requirement. These changes mean that the number of Army reservists in theatre will drop to about 1,050 at the start of the roulement (about 13 percent of the land component) and then further reduce to about 750 over the following months.

We aim to issue the call-out notices in two tranches on 23 July and 27 August and begin deployment in mid-October. Reservist personnel will receive at least 21 days' notice. Mobilisation will be followed by a period of individual, pre-deployment and collective training, integration into receiving units, and then a short period of pre-deployment leave. The majority of those called-out can expect a deployed tour of six months and a total period of mobilisation, including post-tour leave, of about nine months, though for a few it may be longer.

Between now and 23 July we aim to identify for selection as accurately as possible those reservists who are believed to be fit and available for deployment. As is customary, to ensure that we successfully mobilise the required number, we will need to issue a greater number of call-out notices than the actual requirement.

I would emphasise that these are routine adjustments to UK forces in MND(SE). We continue to consider, with our partners in the multinational force, the levels and dispositions of forces required in Iraq in the months ahead, to support the sovereign Interim Government of Iraq through the process leading to the election of a transitional assembly and Government early in 2005. If we judge that further changes to the UK military contribution in Iraq would be appropriate to support this process, we will of course inform the House at the earliest opportunity. At present, however, no such decision has been made.

Northern Ireland

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): As part of our normal process of keeping force levels under review, the General Officer Commandry Northern Ireland, in consultation with the Chief Copstable of the PSNI, has concluded that two of his units (not routinely based in Northern Ireland) can be removed from his command as they are not required for routine support to the police in Northern Ireland. Accordingly, two battalions which have been rear-based outside Northern Ireland since December 2003 and February 2004, will transfer to the command of CinC LAND on 16 July 2004.

This is a prudent measure based on the GOC's and Chief Constable's assessment of the current security situation and the success of the PSNI in dealing with the threat from terrorism with reduced military support. It does not affect the Army's ability to support the PSNI in countering the threat from terrorism and preventing

potential public disorder. We will continue to keep force levels in Northern Ireland under regular review to best deliver the support required by the PSNI.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Medical Expert Witnesses

The Minister for Children (Margaret Hodge): I am making this statement with my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health my right hon. Friend the Member for South Thanet (Dr. Ladyman).

Widespread concern has been expressed about the quality and validity of evidence given by medical expert witnesses following the recent appeals against convictions of mothers alleged to have been responsible for killing their children.

Medical evidence from expert witnesses plays an important part in court proceedings. Proceedings in the criminal and family courts are different from one another and do not follow the same processes. Requirements differ between them in relation to standards of proof, rules of evidence and admissibility of material. In criminal procedures, the competency of witnesses and the evidence of the prosecution can be challenged. The prosecution has to establish facts beyond reasonable doubt. In civil proceedings, evidence is assessed against a threshold of proof that is based on the balance of probabilities, though there too the input of expert witnesses may be tested by the parties to a case and by the court, before judicial determinations are made.

The concerns surrounding the reliability of expert witnesses are both complex and substantial and are worsening the already acute problem which the family courts are experiencing in finding experts of high standing to give medical evidence in proceedings, particularly where child abuse is suspected. Nonetheless, these issues of concern go beyond child protection or children's cases and involve the scientific basis for medical evidence given both in criminal and civil courts, and extend to other areas, such as forensic pathology.

We have already taken a number of steps. I have, as indicated in my statement of 23 February 2004, issued guidance to local authorities in Local Authority Circular I (2004)5, asking that they review the cases of children who are the subject of current care proceedings or where local authorities are exercising responsibility for children who are currently the subject of care and related orders. The results of an initial survey have today been placed in the Library. The survey was carried out by the Association of Directors of Social Services, and asked questions relating to the first stage review we asked local authorities to undertake. This first stage review covered all of the cases of children who are the subject of current care proceedings. This stage did not cover children who were already the subject of a care or related order. These cases will be reviewed as a second stage review and a more comprehensive picture will be obtained once this second stage has been completed.

Of the 150 local authorities with social services responsibilities, 130 have responded to the survey. The 130 local authorities reported that the number of cases in which disputed expert medical evidence features, or is anticipated to feature, is relatively small, arising in only 47 out of the 5,175 cases. There were a total of nine cases where the impact of this evidence on the live proceedings is already known. In one of these cases there has been a change in the local authority's care plan. In a further 38 cases, the proceedings are not yet sufficiently advanced for it yet to be clear whether the disputed medical evidence will result in a change to the care plan. The further survey of the second stage review, which is now being commissioned, will ascertain the extent to which the review of existing orders, perhaps 30,000 in number, has led to changes in current care plans. The results of this second survey will also be placed in the Library.

Nonetheless, the results of this initial survey should not give rise to complacency that the interests of children and their families are being optimally served. We are, therefore, also announcing today a programme of work to determine how best to ensure the availability and quality of medical expert resources to the family courts. Sir Liam Donaldson, the Government's Chief Medical Officer (CMO), will lead this work and plans to involve a wide range of interests, including judicial, legal, clinical specialities, scientific, statistical and consumer interests, as well as health regulatory bodies. The CMO will determine how this work will be taken forward.

I also wish to take this opportunity to highlight the publication, on 14 May 2004, of the judgment of the Court of Appeal in the family cases of Re LB and Re LU. This important judgment sets out clearly the ways in which the judgment in the case of Angela Cannings impacts on the family jurisdiction. I will be writing to local authorities, in order to draw their attention to this new judgment and to the action taken by the GMC in relation to Dr Colin Paterson's past performance as an expert medical witness in certain family cases.

TREASURY

Financial Services

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Ruth Kelly): In July 2002, Ron Sandler published his report into the medium and long-term savings industry in the UK. He found that the savings market was daunting for the consumer, that the industry's products were complex and opaque and that there were weak competitive pressures on providers of financial products. He identified a number of formidable challenges for the Government, the regulator and for the industry. He recommended the introduction of a suite of simple regulated products—with capped charges, investment risk controls and no exit penalties—to build on the existing stakeholder pension and CAT-mark regime and to entrench competition in the market; stripping out substantial elements of cost.

I can today announce some important steps forward which will offer a robust basis for the future of the savings industry—one in which effective competitive forces can be made to work for the benefit of consumers, the wider economy and, ultimately, the industry itself.

First, in response to Ron Sandler's recommendations, the FSA has successfully market-tested a new basic advice regime for stakeholder products. This would

reduce the time taken for a typical pension sale from several hours to approximately 30–40 minutes. In the future, employees would be able to buy a pension or other stakeholder product in their lunch hour.

The FSA has today launched its consultation on the details of the new basic advice regime. The regime reflects the simpler, risk-controlled nature of stakeholder products while maintaining consumer protection.

Secondly, I can today announce that the charges on the new stakeholder regime will be excellent value for consumers, while allowing lower-income consumers greater access to financial products.

The Government have always maintained that the price cap for stakeholder products should reflect the economics of the stakeholder market.

Therefore, in 2003, the Treasury and the Department for Work and Pensions commissioned research by Deloitte on the market impact of a range of price caps to inform the Government's decision on the price cap. This research is being published today. We have also consulted widely with consumer groups and industry.

For the deposit account product, the Government have decided that the interest rate earned should be no lower than 1 per cent. below the Bank of England base rate. This product will replace the cash ISA for which the price cap was set at 2 per cent. below the base rate and therefore represents even better value for money for consumers.

For the medium-term product, the Government have decided to set the cap at an annual management charge of 1.5 per cent. for the first 10 years that the product is held and 1.0 per cent. thereafter. This will provide excellent value for money for consumers while giving providers satisfactory returns and the scope for price competition under the cap.

In the pension market, the stakeholder pension has already had a huge impact. Nearly 2 million stakeholder pensions have been sold and charges have been driven down right across the industry. When the price cap was set in 2000 it allowed for advice to be charged for separately. However, the market has not evolved as expected, with very few firms separately charging for advice. The result has been that the industry has been reluctant to sell their products to lower-income consumers. We have listened to representations from consumer groups and from the industry. The Government have therefore decided to raise the cap on the annual management charge for the stakeholder pension product to 1.5 per cent. for the first 10 years that the product is held and 1.0 per cent. thereafter, matching the cap set for the new medium-term product and encouraging long-term saving. This will allow the cost of basic advice to be incorporated under the cap, whilst maintaining excellent value for customers.

The Government would expect there to be significant price competition under these caps and in particular prices to be lower than 1 per cent. for substantial numbers of stakeholder products sold, for example, without advice or to group schemes. We intend to review the new caps in three years to assess their impact on competition in the market.

We realise that, for less efficient providers these charge caps represent a challenge. But it is only right that firms are challenged so that our objectives of good deals for consumers and increasing efficiency are met. But for those firms that can exploit innovative and efficient ways of distributing stakeholder products, these charge caps represent an excellent opportunity for profitable growth and so I hope that they will be welcomed by the financial services industry.

The Treasury consultation document is available in the Vote Office and the Library of the House.

HOME DEPARTMENT

European Community Association Agreements Applications

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. David Blunkett): On 30 March, I asked Ken Sutton, Senior Director (Asylum) in the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND), to investigate allegations about how applications under the European Communities Association Agreements (ECAA) from citizens of Romania and Bulgaria to come to the United Kingdom to establish businesses or set up in self-employment had been dealt with. The central allegation was of a massive, well-organised scam in relation to these applications and that whilst this had been drawn to the attention of the Home Office nothing had been done to address the problem.

These were serious allegations and to get to the facts quickly in order to set matters right, I asked Mr. Sutton to investigate them. I am grateful to him for the thoroughness of his work. Mr. Sutton makes 15 recommendations all of which I accept and which I am today publishing with his report in full.

The ECAAs, which were signed from 1994 onwards, give rights of establishment in EU member states to those from accession countries seeking to set up in business or self-employment. Such people are to be treated no less favourably than nationals of the host state. The thinking behind the agreements is that, in advance of accession, citizens of countries joining the European Union should have some of the advantages of membership. People who establish themselves here in business or in self-employment bring real benefits to our economy and to their own countries as they prepare for membership of the EU.

Responsibility for granting entry into the UK under the scheme came to be shared between staff in the IND—first in Croydon and later in Sheffield—and staff in posts overseas. The issue at the centre of these allegations is that IND staff granted applications under the ECAA on the basis of pro forma business plans and forged documentation and ignored repeated attempts by entry clearance staff in post in Bucharest and Sofia to challenge this practice. It was also alleged that the underlying reason for this practice was to reduce the number of asylum applications in the UK.

Mr. Sutton confirms that there is clear evidence that the ECAA category has been exploited and that applications were granted to some individuals who were unlikely to have been able to demonstrate that they could sustain themselves in business. However, because of the staged nature of the process, final, indefinite leave

to remain in the UK had only been granted to around 150 applicants in the last two years by the time of the suspension of the scheme in March. Others who came to the UK in this way have not yet reached that status and the actions that Mr. Sutton recommends and that I have instructed the IND to put in place, mean that only those who meet the full requirements of the scheme will be allowed to stay permanently in this country. He also suggests that the real purpose of those coming to the UK in this way was likely to be simply to seek employment rather than to exploit the welfare state for provision of benefits to which they were not entitled.

In turning to how this situation has arisen, Mr. Sutton's report concludes that the central allegation that the Home Office was made aware of a scam and took no steps to address it is wrong. But it does paint a picture of an insufficiently robust approach to the way in which this scheme functioned operationally and a failure of related management systems. The report finds that there was a sharp difference of view between, on the one hand, staff responsible for policy and casework on ECAA applications in IND who thought there was little room in law for manoeuvre in refusing applications and, on the other, staff in Bucharest and Sofia responsible for considering entry clearance applications in such cases, who favoured a much tougher approach. Mr. Sutton concludes that neither approach was entirely right but that a more robust approach could and should be adopted.

The reason for this problem stems back to 1996, when the practice followed in dealing with applications made at ports of entry under the ECAAs was challenged in the courts. In the judgments of the European Court of Justice which followed in September 2001 the Court emphasised that Member States were prohibited from discriminating against these nationals setting up in business or self-employment. Staff in the IND took from this, from the terms of the agreements themselves, and from the fact that there are few restrictions on British citizens establishing business or setting up as self-employed people, that there were only limited grounds for refusing applicants under the ECAA especially in low skilled routes. The view in the IND was so entrenched that the warnings from entry clearance staff and the increase in numbers in the scheme did not lead to a reconsideration of the correct interpretation of our obligations under the ECAA. As a result, no analysis of alternative approaches was considered by senior managers or put to Ministers including when my right hon. Friend the Member for Stretford and Urmston (Beverley Hughes) requested advice following receipt of a letter last year from my hon. Friend the Member for Coventry North-East (Mr. Ainsworth). The fact that an aspect of the Government's approach to ECAA cases had previously been challenged on applicants' behalf in the European Court of Justice highlights the difficulties of striking the right balance in this area.

On the other hand, entry clearance staff in Bucharest and Sofia, faced with a significant increase in the number of applications and the growth of advisers whose services included the provision of standard format business plans, favoured a different approach under which most cases would have been refused. This difference of view was the subject of exchanges between staff in the posts and the Home Office over a period, but the Home Office view prevailed because this was believed to be a necessary consequence of the terms of the agreements and the relevant ECJ judgments.

While the requirements for a successful application are not high, particularly in a low-skilled trade, legal advice that Mr. Sutton has taken in the course of his investigation would support a more challenging approach to decision making in these cases than the Home Office has taken in the past. Under this approach, factors such as those identified by the posts as grounds for refusal could be taken into account in deciding, in the round, whether the application is credible, although none of these factors on its own would support a legally sustainable refusal without looking at the overall strength of the application.

Mr. Sutton has recommended that in future decisions on applications for entry clearance in this category should be taken at the post by entry clearance officers and that new guidance should be drawn up reflecting the legal advice he has taken. I have accepted these recommendations, and a team comprising Home Office, UK visas and FCO staff will shortly visit Bucharest and Sofia to establish the new approach. Once this guidance is in place, I intend, with my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary, to restore the service to those seeking entry clearance under the ECAAs at the posts at Bucharest and Sofia. Genuine applicants under the agreements who establish themselves here in business or as self-employed people will continue to be welcome this country, and will not be discouraged.

In addition, I have reinforced with managers my existing directive that all significant legal judgments should be drawn to my attention with a view to considering both their implications and the potential for further challenge.

Allegations were also made about the use of fraudulent documents in applications. Mr. Sutton's investigation has found that the IND did take an appropriately serious view of cases where there were grounds for suspecting that passports or other travel documents were forged. The report also finds that confirmation of the fact that some bank statements were forged emerged only following the posting of an immigration liaison officer to Bucharest in December last year and that action was taken on this between then and the allegations made in March. This is important given the charge that IND staff were agreeing applications that they knew to be supported by forged documentation. However, there are still grounds for concern in relation to employment records that were not adequately dealt with because they were not believed to be sufficient grounds for refusal of an application. He therefore recommends that the new guidance should make it clear that the authenticity of all supporting documents is relevant to the decision in the round on the credibility of the application.

I have already indicated that only 150 applicants were able to proceed to indefinite leave to remain in the UK as a result of the scheme. However, the number of individuals gaining initial entry into the UK using this route or switching into it from other categories was substantial. Mr. Sutton identifies a total of ECAA applications from Romanian and Bulgarian citizens over the relevant period as being just under 7,400 in 2002–03 and nearly 16,600 in 2003–04. Twenty five per

cent. of applications to switch into the category from people already in the UK were from Romanian and Bulgarian nationals. I have already announced a series of measures to tighten the arrangements for those coming to work in the UK that the recommendations in this report will strengthen still further.

Many of these will be applications that would have been granted in any case, but it is likely that some involved people who intended to work without necessarily setting up in business or being self-employed. Mr. Sutton's report also indicates that it is likely that most of those successful under the scheme worked and in consequence did not come to make demands on the benefits system. None the less, we will now ensure that other than those few who have been granted ILR, all of those already in the UK under the ECAA for a limited period are fully tested before they are given indefinite leave to remain or are permitted further extensions short of that. We shall therefore strengthen our approach to decisions not only at entry clearance stage, but also at later stages, and will be looking to test rigorously whether businesses on which earlier successful applications were based have in fact been established and are viable. I have therefore also accepted Mr. Sutton's recommendation that the relevant immigration rules should be rewritten, and in particular that where the applicant is already in this country and is seeking to switch into the ECAA category, the test should be significantly tightened. The approach should mirror the case of ECAA applicants who arrive at ports without entry clearance. The IND should only grant such applications if the applicant "clearly and manifestly" meets the relevant test for the ECAA category. This should be seen as a significant test and one that the majority of applicants might fail. This will include the allocation of enforcement staff to carry out checks on those already in the system and, if appropriate, to remove them from the UK.

The rewritten immigration rules will also include clearer requirements ensuring that applicants have sufficient funds to be able to support themselves financially while in the UK without having to resort to another job or seeking state benefits.

However, whilst operational practice in relation to these applications was clearly inadequate, the report finds that action was taken to respond to the exploitation of the ECAA route in Romania and Bulgaria in particular in relation to links to organised crime. Mr. Sutton's report finds that, over two years ago, intelligence-led operations and, in particular under Reflex Romania, were mounted against organised immigration crime which had an impact on investigating organised exploitation of the ECAA category. Under this programme resources have been provided to develop a central intelligence unit in Romania with seconded staff as well as specialist training and equipment. Overall—covering immigration crime as a whole—this unit has already disrupted 40 operations and arrested nearly 100 people since it started about 18 months ago.

These operations continue, and have already led to arrests. Since details cannot be published, Mr. Sutton has recommended that Opposition spokesmen be offered a confidential briefing on the operations that I have now made available. He has also recommended that we should build on the equivalent programme in Bulgaria on which work began three months ago.

Mr. Sutton has also reported on the posting last year of an immigration liaison officer (ILO) to Bucharest whose work has been instrumental in crystallising understanding of the recent problems, and who has gone on to prompt action against those representatives whose activities have stepped beyond legitimate help for applicants. I welcome this positive development. This was followed up by visits from senior officials in March this year.

I also touched on these operations in my own speech to the House on 30 March when I referred to the visit by officials earlier that month. This visit was for discussions with the Romanians on combating illegal immigration, including the Reflex work. Abuse of the ECAA route came up at briefing meetings that my senior official had with embassy staff. The report I received from him on 4 March on his visit referred to concerns that the ECAA scheme was vulnerable to abuse, that a solicitor had been arrested on suspicion of facilitation in connection with this, and that he was following this up. In the course of his inquiry, Mr. Sutton has now found that in fact James Cameron had a more detailed informal conversation, not with my senior official, but with other members of his team, which was not reported to me at the time or to my right hon. Friend the then Minister of State.

Mr. Sutton also examined the allegation that the IND approach was motivated by a desire to reduce the numbers of those claiming asylum from the two countries in order to meet the Prime Minister's target to halve the number of asylum applications. He concludes that the Home Office approach was motivated by a genuinely held view that the law required cases to be decided in a particular way, and not, as has been alleged, by the drive to reduce the level of asylum applications. In reality the number of asylum applications from citizens of all East European countries fell during the relevant period which was as a result of our introduction of non-suspensive appeals in clearly unfounded cases. The decrease in applications continued following the introduction of non-suspensive appeals in November 2002 and March 2003. This is consistent with the findings of the recent review of asylum statistics by the National Audit Office [HC 625 Session 2003–04] which concluded that

"there is no clear statistical evidence that the reduction in the number of asylum applications has had any significant impact on other forms of migration".

The supporting analysis for the NAO report, undertaken by a team from University College, London concluded that:

"There is little likelihood of a link between the increase in entrants under the ECAA Arrangements and the fall in the number of asylum applicants over the period".

To sum up, Mr. Sutton's report describes a significant, and until now unresolved, failure in handling ECAA applications over the last two years. As a result, around 150 applicants under the ECAA scheme—some of whom may not have been successful under the process I am putting in place—have been granted indefinite leave to remain. But it does not find that allegations about wholesale exploitation of a process by organised criminals were ignored—on the

contrary arrests had already taken place when the allegations were made—nor that applications were simply waved through in order to meet an asylum target. This has not led to the wholesale undermining of our balanced immigration and asylum policy. Those who came here to work have done so and contributed to our economy.

Nonetheless this report exposes failings that I am determined—with senior management—to set right. Over the last two years, my right hon. Friend the member for Stretford and Urmston oversaw a major programme of change including establishing a programme board structure and the restructuring of management systems and management information. Closer links have been established between operations and policy and with UK visas and posts abroad. UK visas are now, for example, represented at senior level on the Joint Programme Board of officials which oversees the Home Office/Department of Constitutional Affairs Immigration and Asylum Delivery Plan. These changes have already shown results in relation to asylum. Building on that success and the more recent establishment of task-forces on students, marriage, migration for work (including under the ECAAs) and the Commonwealth working holidaymaker scheme which brings together policy, operational and intelligence personnel, IND now has a stronger capacity to identify significant trends in applications, spot emerging problems and mobilise policy and operational resources to address them, as should have happened in this case and which is a prerequisite to ensure that Ministers and senior managers are abreast of all important developments.

In addition, the IND has developed its internal arrangements for management of intelligence. A new tactical and tasking coordination group has recently been established and the national intelligence model has been adopted. The group is responsible for considering risks, deciding priorities and resourcing issues, arising from an assessment of areas of immigration control that might be open to abuse. There is also a new form of reporting to Ministers that covers risks and counter measures including operations. These mechanisms mean that in future, the organisation will be more effective in spotting trends and tackling problems.

Mr. Sutton's report makes a number of other recommendations, all of which I have accepted. Ministers and senior management alike are determined to ensure that real improvements are made as a result of the report we are publishing today.

Written Ministerial Statements

Friday 18 June 2004

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Register of Learning Providers

The Secretary of State for Education and Skills (Mr. Charles Clarke): Following the recent announcement notice by my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary which set out new immigration measures being developed for marriages, students and managed migrants I can now provide further details of the measures relating to education.

Student mobility is a welcome feature of 21st century globalisation and we benefit from it. The recent British Council report showed that students from overseas currently contribute £3 billion a year to the UK economy. It estimated that half a million English language students come to the UK annually. But we must make sure the system is not abused. Those coming to study here must be genuine students studying at a genuine and registered college.

As you will know, we are encouraging English language schools to seek accreditation with existing bodies such as the British Council or the Association of British Language Schools. This is a positive step forward to ensuring we retain our reputation for high quality educational provision. It will provide reassurance to students coming into the UK to learn English and safeguard the future of the sector within the UK.

We have also been looking at measures to ensure that students attending other private education providers are able to receive genuine opportunities. Partly for this purpose, the Department for Education and Skills has been developing plans for a register of educational providers and I can now announce that this will be in place by the end of the year. We will then make the register available to the Home Office to support them in making their decisions on granting leave to study. They propose only to issue leave to study to students attending providers on the register.

The register will be of educational providers who are able to provide evidence of their business and will prevent entirely bogus providers from bringing purported students to the UK. We know these providers are in the minority and that a much greater number of providers are working to make genuine opportunities available to their students. For this reason we are working to make the scheme as straightforward as possible for those genuine providers, who will easily be able to provide evidence of their work. Those providers who receive public funding, and private providers who are accredited, have undergone robust assurance measures already and we will not be looking to undertake further checks on them. I will provide further information on the registration scheme in the summer.

There were other measures proposed to support student immigration. These included asking institutions to report students who have leave to study but do not attend to the Home Office. We are currently consulting with the education sector on these measures and will provide more information in a month or so's time.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Hydebank Wood Prison

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Paul Murphy): I wish to announce that with effect from 18 June 2004, in accordance with the powers conferred on me by Rule 5(1) of the Prisons and Young Offenders Centre Rules (Northern Ireland) 1995, that part of the site of HM Young Offenders Centre Hydebank Wood, known as Ash House and the adjoining land be designated as Hydebank Wood prison. The parts to be designated as Hydebank Wood prison are indicated on the map, by the words "Hydebank Wood", which I have today placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Prison Service

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Paul Goggins): I have today placed in the Libraries of the House copies of the Prison Service's second annual sustainable development report, covering the period April 2003 to March 2004.

The report sets out the significant progress being made by the service in addressing its sustainable development commitments. Most prisons are now more energy efficient, use more environmentally preferable goods and products, employ better waste management practices, and manage more sensitively the wildlife and habitats which exist on the prison estate. In addition, the report describes the service's social impacts in respect of reducing re-offending and improving prisoners' prospects on release.

The report also details the service's future aims, particularly for meeting the targets set under the Government's framework for sustainable development on the Government estate and the initiatives planned to continue its successes.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Millennium Dome and Greenwich Peninsula

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): On 29 May 2002 my noble Friend Lord Falconer of Thoroton advised the House of Lords that English Partnerships had entered into legally binding conditional contracts with Meridian Delta Ltd (MDL), a consortium consisting of Lend Lease and Quintain Estates and Development plc, and Anschutz Entertainment Group (Anschutz), for the future use of the dome and development of approximately 190 acres of land on the Greenwich Peninsula. Since then, planning permission and other consents have had to be secured under the terms of the May 2002 contracts but I am pleased to be able to advise the House today that

the conditions attached to those contracts have been satisfied and the overall transaction has gone unconditional. This is a major milestone in the regeneration of the Greenwich Peninsula and the growth of the Thames gateway.

The long-term benefits we have secured for future generations of Londoners are a fitting legacy for the dome project and for the public investment that has gone into the Greenwich Peninsula.

Four billion pounds of private sector investment, including a £550 million cash return over the next 20 years, will bring new jobs, new homes, new services and infrastructure to London. This is a fantastic result, and reflects the commitment and vision of all our private and public sector partners. Every £1 of public money on the Peninsula has attracted over £6 from the private sector.

The timetable going forward is now as follows. During the summer Anschutz will appoint a contractor for the construction of the new arena inside the dome, for work to start in spring 2005. At the same time MDL will submit to Greenwich Council a planning application for Millennium Square, the major new public space proposed next to the dome. MDL expect contractors to start delivering early infrastructure works to facilitate the wider development late in 2004 and, once detailed planning permission has been secured for the first phases, start of work on the housing and other facilities is expected in late 2005 or early 2006.

Construction of the arena is expected to be completed in spring 2007, together with other leisure uses under the dome roof, the plans for which Anschutz will be working up in the coming months. Millennium Square will be completed within the same timescale, and the residential development will be well under way by the time the new arena opens for business in 2007.

This stage has been achieved only through a considerable effort and close co-operation amongst a number of private and public sector partners. English Partnerships (EP) has secured contracts that are set to deliver an exemplar sustainable community and a fabulous addition to London's entertainment offer. EP will continue to work in partnership with the developers as work progresses and EP's, Quintain's and other third parties' land is drawn down for development. The London Borough of Greenwich granted planning permission on 23 February 2004 for the development, and was robust in securing a highly valuable package of measures of public benefit through the section 106 agreement negotiations and related matters. The Mayor of London, through various of his functions and organisations (primarily Transport for London), has been instrumental both in facilitating the planning permission and in completing elements of the contractual negotiations. MDL and Anschutz have both invested substantial time and considerable money already in preparing the physical plans and developing other matters in preparation for a long period of activity in developing out the site and creating the sustainable community and a magnificent new entertainment hub for London.

The development will see: the creation of an estimated 24,000 new jobs; the building of over 10,000 new homes, 3,800 of which will be social rented, low cost and family units; significant infrastructure improvements; 48 acres of open spaces and parkland; and the building of new community and health care facilities including new schools, all of which will lead to the wider regeneration of the local area and beyond. Some £4 billion of private sector investment is expected from this transaction alone; and across the Peninsula, every £1 of public sector investment will be levering in over £6 of private sector money.

This development will continue the innovation and high quality established at the Millennium Village and elsewhere on the Peninsula. The Village is already paving the way on high density living, achieving new levels of energy efficiency, creating the high quality environment that is needed, and providing integrated services through the new school and health centre that are at the heart of the development. It is setting standards from which important lessons can be learned, and establishing best practice that will influence wider development, on the Peninsula and elsewhere. The development enabled by the completion of the transaction being announced today will deliver a community several times the size of the Millennium Village while incorporating the type and variety of public facilities and infrastructure that are required of a 21st century sustainable community. The numbers of new homes will also make a substantial contribution to delivering the step change announced in the Sustainable Communities Plan, particularly for the Thames gateway growth area.

Anschutz will transform the inner part of the dome into a world-class 26,000 capacity entertainment and sports arena. Anschutz is committed to investing at least £120 million in the Arena, with EP receiving, after a priority return to Anschutz, 15 per cent. of the profits. We cannot reveal the details of the priority return, as it impacts on Anschutz's ongoing business and is commercially confidential.

The arena is only part of the story. In the outer rim of the dome, Anschutz will construct a mixture of retail, entertainment and leisure facilities—this part of the development is currently known as the dome waterfront. EP will receive at least a third share of the profits, after the developer's priority return. At least a further £65 million will be invested in this area by the private sector. EP will also receive payment for the hotel site next to the dome.

On the rest of the land EP and MDL have agreed that they will develop the site jointly over the next 20 or so years, with an end date of 2025. The detailed terms provide for EP to retain ownership of its land until individual plots are required for development. The payout will work as follows: first EP will receive an agreed, indexed, minimum land value, on the sale of any parcel of land—this protects against any downturn in the market; secondly, a share of MDL's profits after deduction of development costs to reflect the enhanced planning consent and the market value at the time of sale to the developer. The share to be received by EP increases over time throughout the development phases from 40 per cent. to 75 per cent.

Where MDL develops land itself, English Partnerships will receive the agreed indexed minimum land value plus a share of sale proceeds, or the value of the development—both after costs—once the development is complete. This share ranges from 15 to 20 per cent. depending on timing.

Over the period of the deal, EP expects to receive a ıancial return in the order of £550 million in cash rms. This is based on a validated assessment of pectation from the sale of the land, and does not clude any additional return which may flow from the ofit shares in respect of the dome, nor any development proceeds in the event that the dome is molished after 2018. Up to that date Anschutz and DL are contractually required to maintain the dome. ıould the dome structure ever be removed and the land developed, EP will be entitled to a 50 per cent. share redevelopment proceeds. This protects English rtnerships' position on the redevelopment value of e land.

With the completion of the contracts English rtnerships costs incurred in respect of the sale process d decommissioning of the dome site have now ceased. ıe total costs incurred by English Partnerships in those eas that have now concluded are as follows:

First dome sale competition	£6.7 million
Latest sale process	£9.0 million
Decommissioning	£6.7 million
Total	£22.4 million

In addition, EP has already incurred costs of £8.2 llion on the management, maintenance, security and surance of the dome site up to 31 May, offset by come from events and lettings of £1.4 million. These tures have been regularly reported to Parliament. As eviously reported to Parliament EP will continue to eet the dome's necessary management, maintenance, curity and insurance costs until Anschutz completes e construction of the arena. However, those costs will adually reduce as preliminary works start before the ain contract commences. EP estimates its average onthly cost will fall from the recent £190,000 to ound £60,000 when the main arena contract starts in ring 2005.

All of EP's costs from when it took ownership of the me (in July 2001) to the completion of the arena's nstruction, and including the costs of the entire sale ocess, will be recovered from sale proceeds. Based on e above figures to date, and an estimate of the likely ture management, maintenance, security and surance costs, the total costs that EP expects to incur relation to the dome project, over six years and after king account of offsetting income from events and tings, is around £33 million.

The Government, in recognition of the leading role ayed by the Lottery, through the Millennium ommission, in helping to regenerate the Greenwich ninsula, has consistently stated that it will receive a r share of proceeds from the sale and development of e dome. The division of proceeds with the Lottery has w been agreed. EP will retain all of the first £30 llion of development receipts, to cover most of those me-related costs described above, as a first call on oceeds. Thereafter, EP will retain 87 per cent. of ceipts and the remaining 13 per cent. will be passed to e Lottery in recognition of the contribution of the me. This share will be reflected in a new legal reement between EP and the New Millennium perience Company, which will bind the parties to the spective shares of proceeds over the period covered by P's contracts with MDL and Anschutz.

Under the terms of the original acquisition of the land EP paid British Gas £20 million, for the original transfer of the land, plus £4.3 million as a share of EP's sale receipts to date on the southern part of the Greenwich Peninsula as required in the original purchase transaction, which entitled British Gas to 7.5 per cent. of all open market value land sales. British Gas has also received a further £10 million in respect of the enhanced value of Greenwich Peninsula due to MDL's proposals and the retention of the dome. This represents good value for money and reduces EP's liability under the original purchase agreement.

In agreeing this deal, the Government focused on four main aspects: value for money; regeneration benefits for the area; deliverability and an innovative use for the dome.

With regard to value for money, we made clear throughout that we would only proceed with the deal if it provided value for money for the Government. That included comparison with the value for money that could be delivered by demolishing the dome, or by alternative development scenarios retaining the dome. The currently estimated value of the development to EP, assuming the full scheme is developed, of around £550 million will depend on market fluctuations over 20 years for the eventual outturn, but we are confident that the structure of the deal will deliver excellent financial returns for the taxpayer as well as enormous public benefits on the ground.

This deal enables the Government to benefit from the increasing value of the land across the peninsula both now and over time. This is sensible, and in the public interest. As the development proceeds, land values will increase. This will be reflected in the land value element in the payment to EP when the land is sold for development. In turn, this will enable EP to reinvest more money in creating sustainable communities; in new housing, including for key workers; in environmental improvements; and in supporting the delivery of regeneration and best practice throughout England.

With regard to regeneration benefits, these are described briefly above. There is much more, which will only become apparent once the development has begun, environmental improvements are being made, jobs are being filled and homes are being built. It is a programme of fitting scale and quality for a site that was the centrepiece of the Millennium celebrations and is now a flagship project for London and the Thames gateway.

As regards deliverability and sustainability, the participants in the development include players established records in delivering developments of the size and quality this project requires. This is their core business.

Anschutz Entertainment Group is part of the Anschutz Corporation, one of the largest private corporations in the United States of America. It has worldwide sporting and entertainment interests, including the Staples centre arena in Los Angeles and the new arena it is building in Berlin. Lend Lease is a major development company, quoted on the Australian stock exchange and operating in 40 countries. It owns Bovis in the UK and has successfully developed the Sydney Olympic village and Bluewater shopping centre. Quintain is a significant player that is quoted on the

London stock exchange. It is also involved in Wembley, and several other large mixed use developments and regeneration schemes.

These players have the resources, the experience and the ability to deliver.

Finally, in relation to the use of the dome, the arena and associated entertainment and leisure facilities will be a highly appropriate use for what is widely acknowledged to be a world class landmark building. Public access is assured. Keeping the dome as the lynchpin of the development has been welcomed by the London Borough of Greenwich and the Mayor.

The Government believes that the regeneration programme now secured for the Greenwich peninsula amply satisfies all four of the criteria that were set out for it.

We look forward to work starting on site in the near future, leading to the delivery of the continued regeneration of a key site in the evolution of Greenwich, London and the Thames gateway.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Mental Capacity Bill

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. David Lammy): The Mental Capacity Bill has been published today.

This Bill is the culmination of extensive consultation and careful consideration over many years, of the needs of people who lack mental capacity. It also benefits considerably from pre-legislative scrutiny by a Joint Committee. The Committee made 99 recommendations for improvements to the Bill, 88 of which the Government have accepted and used to improve the Bill introduced today.

The overriding aim of the Bill is to improve the lives of vulnerable adults, their carers, families and professionals. It provides a statutory framework for decision making for people who may lack capacity, making clear who can take decisions, in which situations and how they should go about this.

The Bill is based on clearly defined principles. Its starting point is that everyone has the right to make their own decisions, and must be assumed to have capacity to do so unless it is proved otherwise. No one should be labelled as incapable—each decision should be considered individually and everyone should be helped to make or contribute to making decisions about their lives. The Bill sets out clear guidelines for, and limits on, other people's role in decision making.

The Bill has the potential to improve the lives of millions of people. At some point in their lives, everyone is likely to be affected by mental incapacity—either personally or because of caring responsibilities. Up to 2 million people currently lack capacity, including for example, over 700,000 people in the UK who suffer from dementia and 145,000 adults in England who have severe and profound learning disabilities.

People affected by a lack of capacity are not well served by the current law, which has grown up in a piecemeal way. It is difficult to plan ahead for a time when you might lose capacity and there is no reliable framework to support carers in their decision making. The absence of a clear legal framework means that it is not always clear who can do what, or how anyone can determine where another person's best Interests lie. Some people may think they can do whatever suits them, perhaps because of a family relationship. Others may err on the side of doing too little, worrying about criticism or even prosecution for the actions they might take.

We know that there is much good practice in making decisions on behalf of adults who lack capacity. The Bill will over-time bring about a quiet revolution in public attitudes and practice, building on current good practice and existing statutory and common law rules. The Bill will provide greater empowerment and better protection for vulnerable people, and for those who face the difficult and sensitive task of handling decisions on their behalf.

The Bill offers better protection both for people who lack capacity and for carers and professionals. For the first time it offers statutory guidance to help assess what constitutes someone's best interests. All decisions must be made in the best interests of the incapacitated person, with adequate weight given to what they themselves would have wanted—their wishes, feelings, values and beliefs—while ensuring that the decision is the least restrictive of their basic rights and freedoms.

Guided by these principles, the Bill provides a legal basis for a person to undertake acts in connection with care and treatment on behalf of an adult who lacks capacity. This provision was drafted as a "general authority" in the draft Bill, but we have renamed and recast it to ensure that it is not misinterpreted or misunderstood. This provision is not about granting a new authority to intervene in the life of someone lacking capacity, but simply confirms that carers are protected from liability when they demonstrably act in the best interests of a person who lacks capacity to consent to what is done.

The Bill provides formal mechanisms to support the decision-making process and offer protection to those involved. It establishes lasting powers of attorney (LPAs), allowing people to appoint an attorney to act on their behalf if they should lose capacity in the future. Unlike a current enduring power of attorney (EPA), an LPA can extend to welfare and health matters (as well as financial matters) if the donor wishes. The Bill also creates a system of court appointed deputies to replace and extend the current system of receivership in the Court of Protection.

The Bill clarifies, with additional safeguards, the current common law rules about advance decisions to refuse treatment. This confirms that people may plan ahead, if they wish, to refuse specific treatments. A properly made, valid and applicable advance decision has the same weight as a refusal of treatment made by a person with capacity. But doctors will need to consider whether the advance decision is really valid and applicable, and any doubt must always be resolved in favour of the preservation of life.

There is a range of other provisions in the Bill to protect the needs of the person lacking capacity. It introduces a new criminal offence of neglect or ill treatment, which can be used against a carer, attorney or deputy who has ill-treated or wilfully neglected a person

who lacks capacity. A person found guilty of such an offence may be liable to a term of up to five years' imprisonment.

The Bill sets up a new court of protection and a new statutory figure, the Public Guardian. Both will be built around the needs of those who lack capacity. The new court will have jurisdiction to consider applications for both financial and health and welfare decisions. The Public Guardian will be the registering authority for LPAs and court appointed deputies and will work with other agencies, such as the police and social services, to respond to any concerns about possible abuse.

Following the recommendations of the Joint Committee, the Bill now provides for properly controlled research that respects the requirements in the clinical trials directive (2001/20/EC) implemented in the UK on 1 May 2004. This will allow for research into conditions related to mental incapacity and how people with capacity problems can be helped. Research studies will be endorsed by a research ethics committee to ensure the project is necessary, safe and cannot be done using people who have mental capacity. There will be stringent safeguards around an individual's participation in a study.

The Bill will also now provide for an independent consultee, to speak up for people who do not have a relative or carer when decisions are taken about serious medical treatment or long-term residential care. The intention is that such consultees will also be involved in annual care reviews for those people, where they have previously been involved in the original decision. There will be a regulation making power to extend the provision to other serious decisions and vulnerable groups, on which we intend to consult with stakeholders.

The Government agree with the Joint Committee's view that codes of practice will be essential for the proper and effective implementation of the new legislation, and that drafts should be available to assist the parliamentary consideration of the Bill. Therefore, codes of practice will be available at Commons Committee stage. There will be extensive consultation on full codes of practice to accompany the Bill when it becomes law and these will be laid before Parliament in draft. Copies of the draft codes will be made available in the Libraries, the Vote Office and the printed paper Ooffice when they are published at Committee stage.

Finally, the Government very much welcomed the Joint Committee's finding that many of the fears which have been raised about possible connections between the draft Bill and euthanasia appear to be misplaced. The Bill has nothing at all to do with euthanasia. Its aim is to empower, and increase protection for thousands of vulnerable adults. For the avoidance of any doubt the Bill now expressly states that nothing in it affects the law on murder, manslaughter or assisted suicide.

Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 21 June 2004

DEFENCE

European Defence Agency

The Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Geoffrey Hoon): The General Affairs and External Relations Council of the European Union agreed on 14 June to the establishment of a European defence agency in the fields of defence capabilities development, research, acquisition and armaments. The agency will make a major contribution to the development of the military capability of EU member states, a key UK objective for the European security and defence policy. By rationalising and harmonising capability requirements, and linking those directly to industrial and research efforts, it will help improve the military effectiveness of European nations which will benefit both the EU and NATO. The work of the agency will be directed by a steering board consisting of national Defence Ministers to ensure it is subject to appropriate national control as well as being given the necessary political impetus.

The Government regret that it was necessary to agree to the establishment of the agency, through a scrutiny override, before parliamentary scrutiny had been completed and before the debate, recommended by the European Scrutiny Committee on 9 June (22nd Report, 2003–04, HC42-xxii) could be held. The United Kingdom did not wish to prevent the decision to establish the agency being taken at the Council meeting given benefits expected from the creation of the agency and the influential role played by the United Kingdom in shaping and implementing its formation. I wrote to the Chairman of the European Scrutiny Committee on 10 June setting out this position. The Government are, nonetheless, fully committed to the need for national Parliaments to have proper oversight of EU issues and the establishment of the European defence agency will be debated in European Standing Committee B on 22 June.

British Forces Post Office (BFPO)

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): Key targets have been set for the chief executive of BFPO for financial year 2004–05. The targets are as follows:

Key Target 1

To provide a guaranteed 100 per cent. absolutely secure defence courier service for the carriage of protectively marked material (PMM).

Key Target 2

To provide a secure defence courier service for the carriage of protectively marked material (PMM) operating within timescales for scheduled and special items at not less than 98.7 per cent. of that agreed with customers.

Key Target 3

To provide a resilient and dependable service for the controlled and specialised handling of defence official mails by operating at least 96 per cent. of deliveries within scheduled timings, agreed with customers.

Key Target 4

To meet 96 per cent. of the requirements negotiated and agreed with customers for the transit times for delivery and collection at defence mail centres.

Key Target 5

To meet 95 per cent. of the agreed customer requirement for the movement of private and official mails from BFPO London to authorised overseas destinations within agrees timescales.

Key Target 6

To achieve an overall 2 per cent. increase in efficiency.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Elections and All-postal Ballots

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. Christopher Leslie): Elections were held on Thursday, 10 June 2004 for local authorities in England and Wales, for the London assembly, for the Mayor of London and for the European Parliament. Following the passage of the European Parliament and Local Elections (Pilots) Act, voting in four regions of England—the north-east, the north-west, Yorkshire and the Humber and the east midlands—was by postal ballot.

The elections were successfully completed. Six thousand and forty-four councillors were elected in England and Wales, twenty five members of the London assembly were elected, a Mayor of London was elected and 78 United Kingdom members of the European Parliament were elected.

In summary the picture is as follows:

In the four all-postal pilot regions, overall turnout in the European Parliamentary election has more than doubled from that in 1999, going up from about 20 per cent. to 42 per cent.

In the other regions, turnout is also up, but by around half on their 1999 figures.

Nearly 3 million more people voted in the four pilot regions in these European elections than in 1999.

In places with all-postal local elections last week, turnout was substantially higher than elsewhere, with cities such as Leeds, Sheffield and Liverpool showing increases in turnout of around half as much again since the last local elections.

We believe therefore that the all-postal pilots have shown, on a significantly larger scale than ever before, that a system in which a postal vote is automatically given to every elector positively encourages participation.

The Electoral Commission will evaluate the pilots and its report is due to be published in mid-September. The Commission will examine the extent to which the manner in which the elections were conducted affected the incidence of electoral offences or malpractice. During the period of the elections, a number of allegations of malpractice were made. Allegations of

malpractice and fraud will be investigated. But with a small number of exceptions, such allegations are not reflected in either the experiences of the electoral administrators or reports to the Crown Prosecution Service. Regional returning officers are not reporting a higher volume of problems than in previous elections. For example, the regional returning officer for the North-west, Sir. Howard Bernstein, and the Greater Manchester police issued a joint statement saying:

"While the nature of allegations has changed this year, the scale has not increased—if anything, it has lessened."

There were also some concerns expressed about the witness signature requirement on the declaration of identity form. Both the Government and the Electoral Commission had reservations about this requirement, and it was almost certainly a factor in limiting turnout. In pilots in local elections in 2003 there was a significantly higher turnout where no witness statement was used. We believe that there are better alternative security arrangements which avoid complexity and avoid the need for an elector to disclose their intention to cast a ballot.

There were, in addition, a number of technical difficulties experienced during the pilots. Returning officers, the Royal Mail and other suppliers have worked very effectively together to overcome these difficulties where they occurred. Of the 14.1 million ballot packs, over 99 per cent. were issued by returning officers by the deadline of midnight on 1 June. The few remaining packs were issued by 5.10 am the following morning. Royal Mail provided an outstanding service in supporting the administrators and suppliers and ensuring their role in the process was delivered effectively.

Our judgment is therefore that these pilots confirm conclusions from previous pilots in 2002 and 2003. These have already been evaluated by the Electoral Commission which concluded that, with some further development, there should in future be a statutory presumption in favour of all-postal voting in local elections. The Government are therefore also confirming its intention for the proposed autumn regional referendums in the three northern regions to be on an all-postal basis.

The success of the all postal pilots will provide a strong base from which we can develop a multi-channel approach to elections in the future, giving further choice and opportunity to electors to have their say. Lessons from the pilots will be incorporated into the Government's wider plans for electoral modernisation, which include both traditional methods of voting and alternatives such as postal balloting and electronic voting.

Whilst testing all postal voting on this scale was bound to present challenges, those challenges were met, and the Government believe that this is a positive result for engagement and participation in the democratic process.

APPENDIX:

1999 & 2004 European Election Comparison

Region	*1999*	*2004*
East Midlands	22.6%	44.6%
North East	19.6%	41.5%
North West	19.4%	41.5%
Yorkshire & Humber	19.6%	42.9%
East of England	24.5%	36.6%
London	23.0%	37.7%
South East	24.7%	36.5%
South West	27.6%	37.8%
West Midlands	21.0%	36.6%
Scotland	24.7%	30.9%
Northern Ireland	57.8%	51.7%
Wales	29.0%	41.9%
Total pilot regions	20.2%	42.6%
Total non-pilot regions	25.9%	37.2%
Total	24.0%	38.9%

2004 European and Local Comparison

	Non-Pilot	*Pilot*	*Percentage Point Difference*
European	37.2%	42.6%	5.4
Local	37.9%	43.6%	5.7

The table below compares turnouts for a sample of local authorities that did not pilot at the May 2003 elections with the results in the June 2004 elections, when all-postal voting was available.

Local Authority	*2003*	*2004*	*Percentage Point change*
Liverpool	21.70%	33.50%	11.8
Leeds	29.80%	43.00%	13.2
Derby	30.60%	46.48%	15.88

The table below compares turnouts for local authorities that piloted in 2003 (when witness statements were not required) and again in 2004 (this time with witness statements required).

Local Authority	*2003*	*2004*	*Percentage Point change*
Newcastle	49.90%	46.80%	−3.1
Sunderland	47.70%	40.50%	−7.2
Gateshead	54.70%	47.71%	−6.99
Trafford	52.39%	45%	−7.39

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Reform of European Union Staff Regulations

The Minister for Europe (Mr. Denis MacShane): The General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) adopted the proposal to revise the staff regulations for EU officials on 22 March. While we noted that the European Scrutiny Committee had withheld clearance from the proposal when it met on 17 March and had recommended the document (15185/03) for debate, we supported the adoption of the proposal at

the 22 March GAERC. We considered the proposal met agreed UK priorities in the reform of the careers structure, pensions and pay of EU officials and would promote merit, efficiency and staff developments and deliver significant long-term savings in the EU budget.

I regret however that we were unable to arrange the debate prior to agreement. This was due to the tight time frame involved. As the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my hon. Friend the Member for Harlow (Mr. Rammell), explained in his letter to the Chairman of the Committee on 19 March, the GAERC needed to agree to the proposal in March to ensure that the new regulations would be in place in time for enlargement on 1 May. The debate with European Standing Committee B has now been scheduled for 23 June. I will be leading the debate.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 22 June 2004

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Temporary Suspension of Adoptions from Cambodia

The Minister for Children (Margaret Hodge): I am announcing a temporary suspension of adoptions of Cambodian children by UK residents.

The temporary suspension is being introduced in response to concerns raised by and investigated by officials from the DfES who visited Cambodia, by the British Embassy in Cambodia and, separately, by other stakeholders about the intercountry adoption process in Cambodia.

I believe that the safeguards in the Cambodian adoption system are currently insufficient to prevent children being adopted without proper consents being given by their birth parents and improper financial gain being made by individuals involved in the adoption process.

The specific areas of concern include:

Evidence relating to the systematic falsification of Cambodian official documents related to the adoption of children;

Evidence relating to the extensive involvement of adoption facilitators in the adoption procedure in Cambodia even though Cambodian law expressly forbids facilitators participating in the adoption process;

Evidence relating to the procurement of children for intercountry adoption by facilitators, including by coercion and by paying birth mothers to give up their children; and

Concern about the prevalence of children trafficking and corruption generally in Cambodia.

The temporary suspension will take effect immediately and will be imposed on all UK applications to adopt children from Cambodia where the prospective adopter has not yet received a matching report from the Cambodian authorities. This is the latest point in the adoption process in Cambodia where a temporary suspension could take effect before a Cambodian adoption certificate is issued.

Although the UK authorities could intervene where a prospective adopter applies to bring a child into the UK there is a considerable risk that the child might be left in the situation where they have been legally adopted in Cambodia, and as such are no longer an orphan but are unable to enter the UK with their adoptive parents. This would pose a significant risk to the individual child and would clearly be unacceptable.

I intend to consider reviewing the temporary suspension when the Cambodian Government pass new adoption legislation or if there is another development I consider to be significant, for example if Cambodia were to implement the 1993 Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in respect of intercountry adoption.

Only in exceptional circumstances will I consider that the temporary suspension should not apply in a particular case. Any decision relating to a particular case will of course take account of what is in the best interests of the child and all the facts of the particular case.

HEALTH

National Health Service Continuing Care

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Dr. Stephen Ladyman): I am publishing today figures that detail the progress made on investigations into cases where individuals may have been inappropriately denied national health service care.

Strategic health authorities have been required to investigate cases where individuals may have been inappropriately denied fully funded NHS continuing care since 1996. Where investigations have revealed that care should have been provided the NHS has been recompensing, or will recompense, individuals for the cost of that care. This process has formed part of the Department's response to the health service ombudsman's report into long term care, which was published in February 2003.

The process began with each SHA reviewing and aligning the criteria for NHS continuing care within its area and ensuring that these criteria conformed with the legal position.

The Department requested that investigations, as far as possible, were completed by 31 March 2004. The number and complex nature of new cases presenting themselves during the three months from January to March 2004 posed significant challenges to meeting that deadline, but the NHS has remained committed to completing investigations as accurately and thoroughly as possible. At the end of March the NHS had completed 57 per cent. (6,713) of all outstanding investigations. This number is greater than the number of cases that the NHS was aware of at the end of December 2003, and demonstrates the NHS's commitment to completing cases promptly once they are received. The Department will check that those cases outstanding at the end of March have been completed as of the end of July. From then onwards I will expect any cases to be completed within two months of all the information on the case being received by the SHA. The situation in each SHA is summarised in the table.

Following the work carried out by SHAs in reviewing, revising and investigating the provision of fully funded NHS continuing care, awareness and application by the NHS is improving. The NHS expects to pay a total of over £180 million when all the cases received by the end of March 2004 have been investigated and restitution made for incorrect decisions. There is a timely appeal process for current cases, so that the need for a retrospective recompense process will decline.

SHA Name	No. of Cases Eligible for Recompense	Investigations Completed	Investigations Underway
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire SHA	0	281	370
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire SHA	34	102	110
Essex SHA	10	146	26
North West London SHA	10	181	191
North Central London SHA	8	64	61
North East London SHA	0	169	11
South East London SHA	60	183	90
South West London SHA	62	194	21
Northumberland, Tyne & Wear SHA	27	126	172
County Durham and Tees Valley SHA	10	48	178
North & East Yorkshire & North Lincs SHA	29	266	93
West Yorkshire SHA	25	130	219
Cumbria and Lancashire SHA	15	154	186
Greater Manchester SHA	5	102	240
Cheshire & Merseyside SHA	107	774	422
Thames Valley SHA	4	181	202
Hampshire and Isle of Wight SHA	30	386	121
Kent and Medway SHA	24	186	44
Surrey and Sussex SHA	5	15	860
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA	43	612	349
South West Peninsula SHA	25	433	120
Dorset and Somerset SHA	14	448	467
South Yorkshire SHA	138	232	78
Trent SHA	0	236	79
Leics, Northants and Rutland SHA	29	202	22
Shropshire and Staffordshire SHA	38	412	19
Birmingham and The Black Country SHA	10	213	73
West Midlands South SHA	8	237	187
Total—England	770	6,713	5,011

Toft Report

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Miss Melanie Johnson): In July 2002, the Government's chief medical officer, Sir Liam Donaldson, commissioned Professor Brian Toft to investigate the circumstances surrounding four adverse events that had occurred in the reproductive medicine units at the Leeds teaching hospitals NHS trust. This followed reports of a mix-up in treatment that led to mixed-race twins being born to a white couple.

Professor Toft's report is published today. He concludes that a mixture of inadvertent human error and systems failure was involved.

He makes a number of recommendations for the trust, the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority and the Department. He also recognises that significant progress has already been made to address the issues his recommendations raise.

Responses by the trust, the HFEA and the Department to the recommendations directed specifically at them are also published today.

The Government recognise fully the distress that these mistakes and failings have caused to patients and their families, and the importance of ensuring that lessons are learned to minimise the likelihood of them happening again. We are grateful to Professor Toft for a thorough investigation, and welcome his report.

Copies of Professor Toft's report, and the responses to it by the trust, the HFEA and the Department have been placed in the Library.

DEFENCE

Army Base Repair Organisation

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): The following key targets have been set out for the Army Base Repair Organisation for financial year 2004–05.

Key Target	Details	Target
KT1—financial performance—return on capital employed (ROCE).	The measurement of ABRO's ROCE.	To achieve a return, averaged over the period 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005, of at least 3.5 per cent.
KT2—delivery performance.	The measurement of revenue projection.	To complete delivery of 100 per cent. of the planned revenue projection (£150 million) in FY2004–05, and in each of the next three years.
KT3—business systems.	The measurement of the introduction and operation of TABS and the imperative to detach from the current supply system.	To introduce and have operational the ABRO business system (TABS) and to have detached from the ESPPA supply system by 31 March 2005.
KT4—efficiency	The measurement of the reduction in price of ABRO output.	To reduce the average equipment repair price, across the whole programme, by 20 per cent. against the 2002–03 baseline.
KT5—winning work	The measurement of ABRO winning work.	To maintain a closing order book of at least £80 million for FY2004–05 and to maintain this level for the next three years.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

FCO Travel Advice

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Jack Straw): In my statement to the House on 1 April, *Official Report*, column 1769, I presented the review of FCO travel advice (Cm 6158), and invited comments from all quarters on its conclusions and recommendations. A number of associations, companies and individuals, many but not all from within the travel industry, responded to this invitation. I held a round table on 27 May with key stakeholders to discuss further their views on our travel advice service and how it might be improved. I am now in a position to announce to Parliament the revisions which will be made.

We have discussed at length the difficult question of how we can best inform the public about the threat from terrorism in individual countries. As I said in my statement of 1 April, our travel advice needs to strike a balance between danger and disruption: making put lie safety its prime concern while minimising the disruption which terrorists want to cause. Our advice must inform people of the threat from terrorism and, when the threat is acute, it will inevitably lead to some disruption in travel in the interests of public safety. But at the same time we must make sure we do not do the terrorists' work for them by causing too much of the disruption which they seek.

I have therefore decided that in future, in the case of intelligence-based terrorist threats, we shall advise against travel only in situations of extreme and imminent danger—if the terrorist threat is sufficiently specific, large-scale or endemic to affect British nationals severely (option E on page 22 of the review). The factors which we shall consider in reaching this judgment will include the specificity and credibility of the intelligence information, the recent history of terrorist incidents in the area, the likelihood that the threat could affect British nationals, and the level of protection from the threat available to British nationals. One reason for making this change of emphasis is to maintain the credibility of our advice. I am concerned that many people continue to travel despite our warnings against all essential travel. The public will be better served if such warnings are used more sparingly. I should add that we shall continue to prescribe against travel in cases of non-terrorist threats (coups, civil unrest, natural disasters) on the same basis as before.

I have also decided to accept the recommendation on page 28 of the review to establish a standing advisory council of travel advice users. Details of membership, timing and agenda are still to be finalised, but the council would bring together representatives of the travel and insurance industries, NGOs and others to advise on issues arising from travel advice and its implementation. It would not be consulted on individual travel advice changes, which would continue to be the responsibility of officials and, ultimately, myself.

I have also asked my officials to implement a number of recommendations from the review, and from the subsequent consultation, to make the travel advice pages clearer and easer to use. Although we have achieved considerably greater clarity over the last year, further refinements have been suggested to ensure that those who consult the FCO website or the telephone call centre take away the key points.

One fact that has emerged clearly from the review is that, while our travel advice service is heavily used, many different types of customer use it for widely varied purposes. Inevitably, we cannot satisfy all the demands, some of which are mutually exclusive, but I am confident the adjustments outlined above will improve the overall quality of service and level of customer satisfaction.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 23 June 2004

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Montserrat

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for International Development (Mr. Gareth Thomas): DFID has agreed a new three-year package of assistance worth £40 million for the UK Overseas Territory of Montserrat. The commitment is included in a new country policy plan, as part of our ongoing partnership with Montserrat. The plan sets out our agreed strategy for continued working in support of efforts by the Government of Montserrat to rebuild essential infrastructure and to regenerate the island economy, in the aftermath of the volcanic crisis of the mid 1990s.

As a result of that volcanic activity, most southern areas of the island—which included the capital town of Plymouth and the international airport—became uninhabitable and still remain subject to extremely restricted access for safety reasons. While the volcano remains active, the challenge has been to rebuild and provide basic facilities and services for the island community in the "safe" northern half of the island. Considerable progress has already been made, with DFID support totalling some £206 million since the onset of the crisis.

The focus for future support will be on activities that will help generate local revenue and encourage private sector investment. There are already some encouraging signs of private sector interest. A new airport, part funded by DFID, replacing the one lost to the volcano, will be completed later this year and should be a key contribution to the process of stimulating the economic growth that is needed.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Rural Payments Agency (Performance Targets)

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Margaret Beckett): I have set the Rural Payments Agency the following performance targets for 2004–05:

Customers

To process and pay at least 96.14 per cent. of valid IACS claims by value within EU deadline.

To process and pay at least 80 per cent. of valid non-IACS claims by volume within ministerial guidelines and 99 per cent. within the set EU Commission deadlines or in their absence 60 days.

To process and pay at least 98.5 per cent. of valid claims correctly.

To record calf registrations and issue passports within 14 days of a valid application in 90 per cent. of cases.

Working with DEFRA Communications and Policy Directorates to agree by 31 December 2004 an effective customer communications strategy for the Single Payment Scheme.

Finance

To ensure that disallowance within the control of RPA due to non-compliance with EU requirements remains below 2.5 per cent. of the value of CAP payments made by the agency.

To complete the agreed inspection programme for CAP schemes in accordance with EU regulatory requirements, taking into account any approved derogations.

Business Processes

Subject to timely agreement on relevant CAP reform policy issues and the availability of the funding set out in the December 2003 business case, to have developed the new processing system in order to support the Single Payment Scheme under CAP reform so that payments under this scheme can be made during the 2005–06 scheme payment window.

To provide 95 per cent. of customers by 31 March 2005 with details of that part of their entitlement under the Single Payment Scheme which relates to their historic receipts from existing schemes.

To develop an effective procedure for resolving queries to support the provision of details of historic entitlements.

To provide accurate and timely operational advice in support of policy development and DEFRA business systems.

People

To develop a baselined workforce planning strategy by 31 March 2005 to inform future staffing levels, skills requirements and reward policy.

To manage recruitment and retention issues actively to ensure that unplanned turnover does not exceed 5 per cent., so as to meet "bulge" and business continuity requirements.

To reduce sick absence at BCMS by two days per staff year against the final outturn per staff year in 2002–03.

PRIME MINISTER

Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe

The Prime Minister (Mr. Tony Blair): My hon. Friend the Member for Caerphilly (Mr. David) has been appointed as a full member of the United Kingdom delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe in place of my hon. Friend the Member for Hyndburn (Mr. Pope).

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 24 June 2004

HOME DEPARTMENT

ChangeUp: A Capacity Building and Infrastructure Framework

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Fiona Mactaggart): I am today announcing the launch of ChangeUp—a programme of investment specifically for capacity building and infrastructure in the voluntary sector.

ChangeUp aims to ensure that by 2014 the needs of frontline voluntary and community organisations will be met by support which is available nationwide, structured for maximum efficiency, offering excellent provision which is accessible to all, truly reflecting and promoting diversity and sustainably funded. It sets out an architecture for how that infrastructure should develop and highlights key strategic actions that will bring it into being.

ChangeUp has been created in response to the *2002 Cross-Cutting Review on the Role of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Service Delivery* which recommended that the voluntary and community sector and Government together draw up a strategy to underpin the capacity of the sector. The Home Office has led on the development of the framework, which has included a three-month consultation period on the document *Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure—A Consultation Document*, published in September 2003.

ChangeUp sets out the principal capacity needs of frontline organisations—especially small and medium sized organisations. The main elements are performance improvement, workforce development and leadership, ICT, governance, supporting volunteers and financing voluntary and community sector activity. Each has a clear high level objective and achievable actions which will make a difference.

It also describes how voluntary and community sector infrastructure should be modernised and reconfigured. The emphasis is on placing the voluntary and community sector in the driving seat, helping it to work with public sector partners and funders to agree the best way to provide high quality and sustainable support to frontline organisations.

Nationally, expertise and leadership in particular areas should be provided by "hubs" which will build on best practice and reduce confusion in the sector by bringing people together to provide strategic leadership, signpost organisations to sources of support, and act as beacons of good practice, reaching directly to frontline organisations to develop advanced thinking and good practice.

The ChangeUp framework will be used as a planning tool for Government, funders and voluntary and community sector partners at all levels and in different sectors to develop further action and will provide a point of reference for future thinking.

Implementation will be underpinned by Home Office investment of £72m of ChangeUp funds that will support strategic planning and catalyse modernisation of infrastructure provision to improve its quality and reach.

Copies of the document are available in the House Library and on the Home Office website at www.homeoffice.gov.uk. A regulatory impact assessment is also available with the document.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Animal Welfare Strategy

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Mr. Ben Bradshaw): I am pleased to announce today the publication of the "Animal Health and Welfare Strategy for Great Britain."

The strategy fulfils the Government's commitment made in the strategy for sustainable food and farming to work in partnership with industry, specialists and the wider community to provide an overarching framework for the development and implementation of policies in all areas of animal health and welfare. It is based on the public consultation launched on 15th July 2003 and has been jointly produced by Defra, the Scottish Executive and Welsh Assembly Government.

I have arranged for copies of the "Animal Health and Welfare Strategy for Great Britain" to be made available in the Libraries of both Houses.

Copies are also available on the Defra website at www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/ahws/default.htm

Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Margaret Beckett): The Government are publishing the sixth section of the *Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate (Framework)* on waste today. This is available on the sustainable development in Government website. Copies of the website, on CD-Rom, will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

The waste section of the *Framework* sets for the first time a Government wide commitment to reduce waste on the Government estate, and increase recycling and composting rates. It encourages Departments to purchase re-usable, recyclable, and recycled products; and return used products to manufacturers. This will make an important contribution to the UK's target on reducing waste sent to landfill, and will help deliver our commitment to moving up the waste hierarchy towards more sustainable waste management practices.

The *Framework* now requires all relevant waste management contracts to take account of measures and opportunities for reducing and avoiding the impact of waste, and for collecting waste management data.

Departments must draw up sustainable waste management strategies setting out how they will deal with these issues.

Our ongoing work on the *Framework* defines a set of cross-Government targets for sustainable development, and outlines the mechanisms by which Departments will be expected to achieve them. These challenging targets give a clear indication of the Government's continued determination to take a lead in the practical implementation and achievement of sustainable development.

The *Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate* can be viewed at www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/sdig/improving/index.htm

NORTHERN IRELAND

Strategic Investment Board: Report and Accounts 2003–04

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Ian Pearson): Today I have placed in the Libraries of the House, copies of the report and accounts 2003–04 of the Strategic Investment Board for Northern Ireland.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Chris Pond): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions I am announcing the publication of performance statistics for local authority administration of housing benefit and council tax benefit (HB and CTB) for the fourth quarter of 2003–04. A copy of the quarterly statistics for all local authorities in Great Britain has been placed in the Library and has been published on the Department for Work and Pensions website at http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/other_stats.asp

Publishing these statistics is part of our strategy for reforming housing benefit and for ensuring that local authorities are accountable for their performance in administration of housing benefit and council tax benefit.

Housing benefit and council tax benefit performance statistics show that in the fourth quarter of 2003–04, authorities that returned data reported that:

- new claims were processed in an average of 47 days compared to 53 days in the fourth quarter of 2002–03;
- some 161 authorities had met the performance standard for processing new claims (36 days), compared to 130 in the same quarter of 2002–03;
- change of circumstances were processed in an average of 14 days, compared with 17 days in the fourth quarter of 2002–03;
- some 179 authorities met the performance standard for processing change of circumstances (9 days), compared to 160 in the same quarter of 2002–03.

The statistics are un-audited and are provided quarterly by local authorities to my Department.

The audited best value performance information for English local authorities for 2002–03 was published by my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister on 18 December 2003 on the best value performance indicators website at: http://www.bvpi.gov.uk/home.asp. A copy is available in the Library.

The most recent corresponding data for local authorities in Wales is also for 2002–03. This is published on the Audit Commission website at http://www.lgdu-wales.gov.uk/eng/Project.asp?id=SX99Al-A77F4BA8. A copy of the relevant extract from this site is available in the Library.

The most recent corresponding data for local authorities in Scotland is also for 2002–03 and is in the Accounts Commission publication "Performance Indicators 2002–03: Benefits, Finance and Corporate Issues", a copy of which is available in the Library.

HEALTH

Government's Response to the Health Committee's Report on elder abuse

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Dr. Stephen Ladyman): The Government's response to the Health Committee's Second Report of Session 2003–04 on elder abuse, Cm 6270, has been published today. Copies have been placed in the Library.

National Health Service Continuing Care

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Dr. Stephen Ladyman): I regret that the information I provided in my written statement of 22 June contained an error in line 23 of the table, the entry for the South Yorkshire Strategic Health Authority. Where it read 138 cases eligible for recompense, it should have said 69; and where it read 232 investigations completed, it should have said 163. The correct data is in the table.

SHA Name	*No. of cases eligible for recompense*	*Investigations completed*	*Investigations underway*
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire SHA	0	281	370
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire SHA	34	102	110
Essex SHA	10	146	26
North West London SHA	10	181	191
North Central London SHA	8	64	61
North East London SHA	0	169	11
South East London SHA	60	183	90
South West London SHA	62	194	21
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear SHA	27	126	172
County Durham and Tees Valley SHA	10	48	178
North and East Yorkshire and North Lincs SHA	29	266	93
West Yorkshire SHA	25	130	219
Cumbria and Lancashire SHA	15	154	186
Greater Manchester SHA	5	102	240
Cheshire and Merseyside SHA	107	774	422
Thames Valley SHA	4	181	202

SHA Name	*No. of cases eligible for recompense*	*Investigations completed*	*Investigations underway*
Hampshire and Isle of Wight SHA	30	386	121
Kent and Medway SHA	24	186	44
Surrey and Sussex SHA	5	15	860
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA	43	612	349
South West Peninsula SHA	25	433	120
Dorset and Somerset SHA	14	448	467
South Yorkshire SHA	69	163	78
Trent SHA	0	236	79
Leicester, Northants and Rutland SHA	29	202	22
Shropshire and Staffordshire SHA	38	412	19
Birmingham and The Black Country SHA	10	213	73
West Midlands South SHA	8	237	187
Total—England	770	6,713	5,011

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister will publish for public consultation on 25 June, a paper on accounting for leaseholders monies.

Service charge payers are entitled to be confident that the money they pay towards the upkeep of their building is held properly, and is used for the purposes it is provided for. This is an area which requires strengthening, and the accounting provisions in the Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002 (the Act) provide for this.

The consultation paper invites comments on the provisions in the Act that make changes to the way in which service charge monies are held, and the information that is provided to service charge payers.

It sets out the proposals for regulations to be made by the Secretary of State. These regulations will set out the detailed requirements that landlords will have to comply with where the holding of service charge money and the provision of information relating to service charges are concerned.

Copies of the paper are being sent to a wide range of interested parties including local authorities, housing associations, financial institutions and others with an interest in this issue. The closing date for responses is 24 September.

Copies of the paper will be made available in the Libraries of the House, and will be available on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website at http://www.odpm.gov.uk/ tomorrow.

Written Answers to Questions

The following answers were received between Friday 28 May and Friday 4 June 2004

TRANSPORT

A1

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what programme of widening and improvements he plans to the A1 from the Tyne to the Scottish borders. [176224]

Mr. Jamieson: The programme of widening planned to the A1 from the Tyne to the Scottish borders is as follows:

A1 Adderstone to Belford

This proposed scheme will upgrade 4 km of single carriageway to dual carriageway which will significantly improve the alignment of the A1 improving road safety.

A1 Morpeth to Felton

This scheme will upgrade 13 km of single carriageway to dual carriageway including a new bridge over the Coquet gorge improving road safety and reducing journey times. On completion it will provide a continuous dual carriageway between Newcastle and Alnwick.

The Highways Agency expect later during this financial year to invite suppliers to bid for development of both of these schemes.

The programme of other improvements planned to the A1 from the Tyne to the Scottish Borders is listed as follows. All of the schemes are estimated to start during this financial year.

Scheme

A1 Guyzance Junction—provision of signing, lining, deceleration lane and enhancement of road surfacing.

A1 at West Mains Junction—provision of signing, lining, high friction surfacing and modifications to pedestrian traffic island.

A1 Denwick Interchange—provision of signing and lining.

A1 Roadside Cottages at Haggerston—scheme being developed for non-motorised users.

Airports

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will remove the safeguarding of land for a possible wide-spaced runway at Gatwick in the event of a decision to proceed with a third runway at Heathrow. [175977]

Mr. McNulty: The Future of Air Transport White Paper says that land should be safeguarded for a new wide-spaced runway at Gatwick after 2019 in case conditions attached to the construction of a new runway at Heathrow cannot be met. The situation at Gatwick will be reviewed at the stage when any planning application for a new runway at Heathrow has been decided.

Mr. Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) if he will list the UK airports he estimates will have the necessary pier ready when the Airbus 380 starts commercial operations; [176638]

(2) what estimate he has made of the number of piers being prepared for the Airbus 380 at United Kingdom airports. [176640]

Mr. McNulty: We understand that London Heathrow and Manchester Airports expect to provide full pier-served facilities at the start of A380 commercial operations.

In addition London Gatwick, London Stansted and Nottingham East Midlands Airports should have the ability to accept the aircraft on stand if required, but do not expect to provide full pier service at the outset.

The CAA has communicated guidance to all licensed aerodromes on safety requirements for accepting the A380 at the start of its commercial service.

Aviation White Paper

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the legal challenges which have been made in relation to the Aviation White Paper since its publication. [176042]

Mr. McNulty: The Department is currently subject to legal proceedings against the White Paper by the following parties:

(i) Essex and Hertfordshire County Councils and Uttlesford, North and East Herts District Councils;

(ii) London Boroughs of Wandsworth and Hillingdon with individuals representing HACAN, LADACAN and Stop Stansted Expansion;

(iii) Crawley North East Sector Consortium—Persimmon Homes (South East) Ltd., and Laing Homes Ltd.

Departmental Annual Report

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the targets and achievement rates referred to on page 50 of the Department of Transport Annual Report 2004; and if he will list *(a)* the local authorities and *(b)* the targets they have met. [174168]

Mr. McNulty: Local authorities chose to set a large number of local transport targets in their 2001–06 Local Transport Plans (LTPs)—an average of 30 in each of the 85 plan areas. The 2003 LTP Annual Progress Reports gave an assessment of progress against those targets, where evidence of progress was available. These assessments indicated that around 70 per cent. of those targets were on course to be achieved.

A full list of targets that are on course to be achieved could be produced only at disproportionate cost. Detailed information from each LTP area is available in the 2003 Annual Progress Reports, which may be obtained from local authorities.

Honours

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much time his Department spent dealing with honours in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by civil service grade. [173044]

Mr. McNulty: The majority of the work on honours is undertaken by the departmental honours team. Honours work in the Department for Transport is dealt with in a dedicated honours secretariat dealing with honours nominations for both the Department for Transport and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. One EO deals with transport matters full time and a SEO and AO deal with matters arising for both Departments.

Time spent by senior civil servants is as follows:

Grade	*Total hours*
Grade 1	6
Grade 2	10
Grade 3	2

Information is not available on time spent on honours related work by departmental staff who are not members of the Department's honours teams or attendees of formal sift meetings.

International Ship and Ports Security Code

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on progress towards implementation of the International Shipping and Ports Security Code in the United Kingdom. [176038]

Mr. Jamieson: The UK is making good progress towards implementation of the International Ship and Port Security (ISPS) Code and there is every expectation that all UK flagged ship and port facilities that submit acceptable security plans by the deadlines set, will be ISPS compliant by the 1 July 2004 deadline.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will amend Marine Guidance Note MGN 214 *(m)* to take account of the enforcement of the International Ship and Port Security Code. [174609]

Mr. Jamieson: There are no plans to amend MGN 214, which relates to certificates of competency for radio operators, because it is not effected by the introduction of the ISPS Code.

However, MGN 241 regarding advice on piracy to UK seafarers will be amended to reflect the ISPS Code, although the scope of revision has not as yet been determined. It is hoped that the ISPS Code will have both a positive impact on improving the maritime industry's resilience to terrorist action and have a secondary benefit of helping to reduce piracy. This is because it will generate increased security awareness and tighten security procedures, both on ships and in ports.

Journey Distances

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many journeys were made in the United Kingdom by each person on average, broken down by journeys of *(a)* less than a mile, *(b)* between one and two miles, *(c)* between two and five miles, *(d)* between five and 10 miles, *(e)* between 10 and 25 miles, *(f)* between 25 and 50 miles, *(g)* between 50 and 100 miles and *(h)* more than 100 miles, in (i) 1975–76, (ii) 1985–86, (iii) 1995–96 and (iv) 2001–02; and how many are projected to be made in (A) 2005 and (B) 2010. [176040]

Mr. McNulty: The National Travel Survey provides the following information for personal travel in Great Britain.

Figures are not available for the UK and, because of differences in the coverage of the surveys, there may be a discontinuity between 1975–76 and later years. Forecasts of trips by distance travelled will be published in the summer as part of the Transport Strategy Document.

Trips per person per year

	1975–76	*1985–86*	*1995–96*	*2001–02*
Under one mile	275	335	293	241
One to under two miles	183	187	176	189
Two to under five miles	228	250	270	271
Five to under 10 miles	127	133	157	152
10 to under 25 miles	76	84	107	108
25 to under 50 miles	20	22	29	32
50 to under 100 miles	7	9	13	13
100 miles and over	3	4	7	7
Unknown length	15	—	—	—
All lengths	935	1,024	1,051	1,013

Rail Infrastructure

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the *(a)* change in average train length, *(b)* change in average platform length and *(c)* change in track capacity has been in the London area since January 2002. [176252]

Dr. Howells: The information is not available in the form requested.

Rail Service Franchises

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what total costs have been incurred by the Government and Government agencies in the franchising and tendering of passenger rail services since 1997. [176270]

Mr. McNulty: Between April 2001 and April 2004 the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) has spent £40.7 million on franchise replacements and extensions. This includes the full costs of tendering and implementation. Prior to the SRA's inception in 2001 total spend, in the period between 1998 and April 2001, on franchising was £6.095 million.

Yellow School Buses

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the role of yellow school buses in easing traffic congestion. [176065]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department carried out an evaluation of various small-scale Yellow School Bus schemes in 2003. The evaluation found that well designed schemes do have the potential to reduce car dependency on the school run, but that care needs to be taken to ensure that they are appropriate to local circumstances and, in particular, do not reduce levels of walking or cycling, or undermine the viability of important commercial bus services. I am arranging for copies of the full evaluation report to be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Separately, as part of last year's Local Transport Capital settlement, the Department has provided £18.7 million of funding for a much larger scale Yellow School Bus scheme in West Yorkshire. Once this scheme has been implemented, we will be working closely with West Yorkshire PTE to evaluate the impacts of the scheme including the benefits to road traffic congestion.

DEFENCE

Plastic Baton Rounds

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many and what percentage of applications for export licences for L21 of A1 plastic baton rounds have been rejected; and from what country each application originated. [176092]

Nigel Griffiths: I have been asked to reply.

Details of all export licences issued, broken down by destination, are contained in the UK Strategic Export Controls Annual Report. Plastic baton rounds are covered by the descriptor "crowd control ammunition".

Since 1999 the DTI has refused two applications for export licences for plastic baton rounds/cartridges. These applications were from companies wishing to export from the UK.

Information on the percentage of applications for plastic baton rounds refused could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Asbestos

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of *(a)* the risk of exposure to asbestos to householders from building materials in houses and outbuildings, *(b)* the level of public awareness of such risks, *(c)* the expected levels of illness and death of householders exposed to asbestos in the home and *(d)* the desirability of further measures to raise awareness of such risks amongst the public. [166747]

Jane Kennedy: The Health and Safety Executive is responsible for exposure to asbestos where it is within the scope of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

For the 1974 Act to apply to domestic premises, there would have to be either an associated work activity or undertaking. Therefore, most risks to householders from asbestos in their homes are outside the scope of the Act.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the number of farm buildings in England in which asbestos may be present. [176643]

Jane Kennedy: During the development of the regulatory impact assessment for the new duty to manage asbestos; Regulation 4 of the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002 an assessment was made of the number of premises likely to require an asbestos survey.

This assessment suggests that approximately 50 per cent. of buildings on farms would need to be inspected for asbestos. The number of agricultural premises requiring a survey under the new regulation was estimated to be 70,000.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the health risks to farmers and their employees arising from *(a)* working in, *(b)* repairing and *(c)* dismantling farm buildings clad with corrugated sheeting made from asbestos cement containing white asbestos. [176645]

Jane Kennedy: The health risks will depend on the methods of work employed and the type of material being worked on.

Asbestos cement, the most common asbestos-containing material on farms, is considered a lower risk than other types of material because it does not easily release asbestos fibres. The controls required when working on asbestos cement are therefore relaxed accordingly. For this reason the Asbestos (Licensing) Regulations 1983 do not require an HSE licensed contractor to be used for work with asbestos cement.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether farmhouses occupied by farmers or their employees are regarded as workplaces for the purposes of the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002. [176647]

Jane Kennedy: If the building's primary purpose is a residence, farmhouse or other home, whether tied to the farm or rented out, it will normally be classed as domestic premises for the purposes of the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations. Therefore regulation 4 (the duty to manage asbestos in non-domestic premises) does not apply to them.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether financial assistance is available to the farming industry to assist in complying with the provisions of the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002. [176649]

Jane Kennedy: There is no specific financial assistance from the Department of Work and Pensions to help farmers comply with the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002.

However, the new duty to manage asbestos in non-domestic premises is designed to be flexible and compliance with the duty should be costly only where the risk justifies it. For example, asbestos-containing materials should be left in place if they are in good condition and unlikely to be disturbed.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what advice he has given farmers on alternatives to white asbestos construction products used specifically for the purposes of fire prevention and insulation in farm buildings; and what assessment has been made of the safety of these alternatives. [176651]

Jane Kennedy: Centrally the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has consulted with representatives of the farming community, including the National Farmers Union (NFU) and the Rural, Agricultural and Allied Workers section of the TGWU, on issues relating to asbestos through the Health in Agriculture Group which was set up in 1997. Guidance on asbestos is also included in the HSE guide to health and safety on farms 'Farmwise'. The NFU have also produced specific guidance on asbestos for their members, upon which HSE commented.

In order to inform the debate on the banning of white asbestos, and on behalf of the EC's Committee on Toxicity, Ecotoxicity and the Environment, HSE commissioned the Institute of Environment and Health to carry out a review comparing the risks from white asbestos with other materials that could be used as alternatives. This concluded that the physical properties of a range of alternative materials led to the conclusion that appropriate substitutes for chrysotile asbestos should be used. The findings were endorsed by the EC committee as well as the Department of Health's committee on carcinogenicity.

Benefits (Bootle)

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many senior citizens in Bootle have benefited from the winter fuel allowance since 1997. [176234]

Malcolm Wicks: The number of senior citizens in the Bootle constituency who have benefited from a winter fuel payment in each year since 1999–2000 (including provisional figures for 2003–04) is in the table. Information relating to the 1997–98 and 1998–99 winters is not available.

	Payments made
1999–2000	13,275
2000–01	14,425
2001–02	14,330
2002–03	14,270
2003–04	14,230

Notes:

1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest 5.

2. Please note that the figures for 2003–04 refer only to the main payment run i.e. they do not include the late payment run figures. We estimate that there are approximately 100,000 people in Great Britain paid via late payment runs (0.8 per cent. of all payments). However, since late payment runs are mainly in respect of non-system cases whose claim had not been received by Qualifying Week, they are heavily skewed towards men aged 60.

Source:

IAD Information Centre, 100 per cent. samples.

Child Poverty

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many children were living in poverty in each of the last 25 years; and what estimate he has made of how many children will be living in poverty in each of the next five years. [175004]

Mr. Pond: Poverty and social exclusion are complex and multi-dimensional issues, affecting many aspects of peoples' lives—including their living standards, health, housing, the quality of their environment and not just low income. "Opportunity forall—fifth annual report", published on 18 September 2003, contains an annex of indicators tracking the Government's performance on tackling poverty and social exclusion across a range of domains much wider than income alone—amounting to around 50 indicators in total, 15 of which are child specific.

Information showing the proportion and number of children living in low income households going back to 1979 can be found in the publication "Households Below Average Income 1994–95 to 2002–03".

Steady progress is being made towards the PSA target to reduce by a quarter the number of children living in low income households by 2004–05. Between 1998–99 and 2002–03 the number of children in low-income households fell by 600,000 after housing costs and by 500,000 before housing costs. The latest data do not include the effect of tax credits introduced in April 2003, nor do they include the increases announced in the 2003 pre-Budget report.

The document "Measuring child poverty", published in December 2003 outlines the Government's measure of UK child poverty for the long term. This new measure will begin from 2004–05 and will be used to monitor our progress towards meeting our goal of halving the number of children in poverty by 2010.

All publications listed are available in the Library.

Child Support Agency

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his oral statement of 11 February to the Work and Pensions Committee on the Child Support Agency reforms, if he will list the problems that are to be *(a)* identified and *(b)* remedied by the recovery programme. [170040]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. Steve Webb, dated 1 June 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary questions about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to his Oral Statement of 11 February to the Work and Pensions Committee on the Child Support Agency reforms, if he will list the problems that are to be *(a)* identified and *(b)* remedied by the recovery programme.

EDS are currently working to remedy four main groups of problems in relation to the computer service that they are contracted to provide to the Child Support Agency. These cover issues at the interface between the new Child Support system and existing Departmental systems (primarily those providing computer support for Income Support and Jobseeker Allowance), defects in the underlying application software, issues within the

work management and telephony components and issues within the underlying system infrastructure (that will be required to support the greatly increased number of cases to be held on the system following the migration of cases from the existing computer system). EDS indicated at the Work and Pensions Select Committee hearing on 29 March that they are intending to complete this remedial work by October this year.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many absent parents paid maintenance to the Child Support Agency for their children which because of computer problems was not paid to the parent with care *(a)* three, *(b)* six, *(c)* nine and *(d)* 12 months ago; and what the figure is for the most recent period for which figures are available. [171742]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. Frank Field, dated 1 June 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many absent parents paid maintenance to the Child Support Agency for their children, which because of computer problems, was not paid to the parent with care *(a)* three, *(b)* six, *(c)* nine and *(d)* 12 months ago; and what the figure is for the most recent period for which figures are available.

I do not have the information that you seek. However, I can say that in the period 3 March 2003 to 29 April 2004, nearly 600,000 payments were made automatically by the new computer system to parents with care. The average period of time between the payments being received from the non-resident parent and paid to the parent with care was well within one month. In the same period 3,544 payments were made manually because of system difficulties. We estimate that the average time from receipt from the non-resident parent to payment to the parent with care for these cases was also within one month.

Mr. David: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will take steps to ensure that the Child Support Agency resolves the case of *(a)* Mr. Alan Jones of Bargoed, *(b)* Ms Sandra Roberts of Caerphilly and *(c)* Ms Angela Lawford of Nelson without further delay. [172591]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. Wayne David, dated 1 June 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will take steps to ensure that the Child Support Agency resolves the case of *(a)* Mr. Alan Jones of Bargoed, *(b)* Ms Sandra Roberts of Caerphilly and *(c)* Ms Angela Lawford of Nelson without further delay.

As individual cases are confidential, I will write to you separately about each of these cases. This is in line with paragraph 12, part 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many changes his Department sought to the design of the new Child Support Agency IT system. [172899]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. David Willetts, dated 1 June 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary questions about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many changes his Department sought to the design of the new Child Support Agency IT system.

Under the terms of the Department's Private Finance Initiative based contract with EDS, the Agency is responsible for specifying its requirements leaving detailed design development and testing to EDS. I am therefore unable to provide the information you require. The Department's requirement is based on the 'operational vision for Child Support Reform' that was published in August 2000 and is available in the library of the House of Commons. There have been no material changes to this.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in how many cases there are nil assessments in respect of Child Support Agency cases under *(a)* the old system and *(b)* the new system; and for what reasons no payment is required rather than a minimum payment. [174847]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to my hon. Friend with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. David Kidney, dated 1 June 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary question abut the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, in how many cases there are nil assessments in respect of Child Support Agency cases under *(a)* the old system and *(b)* the new system; and for what reasons no payment is required rather than a minimum payment.

In the last full year of the 'old system' (2002/3) we received around 325,000 maintenance applications and in the same year we made around 38,000 assessments that resulted in a nil payment required. In the first year of the new system we received over 321,000 applications. In the same period we made around 12,000 calculations that resulted in a nil payment required.

Under the new arrangements a nil calculation rather than a minimum payment calculation can arise where the non-resident parent is:

A student;

A child within the meaning of section 55 of the Act—this generally means a child under 16 or under 19 and in full time non advanced education or a child under 18 in certain prescribed conditions;

A prisoner;

A person who is 16 or 17 years old and who is either, in receipt of income support or income-based jobseeker's allowance or is a member of a couple and their partner is in receipt of income support or income based jobseeker's allowance;

A person receiving an allowance in respect of work-based training for young people, or in Scotland, Skillseekers training;

A person who is resident in a care home or an independent hospital or is being provided with a care home service or an independent health care service and who is in receipt of certain specified pensions, benefits or allowances or who has the whole or part of the cost of his accommodation met by a local authority;

A patient in hospital who is in receipt of income support or state pension credit and has been an in-patient for more than 52 weeks;

A person in hospital in receipt of a specified benefit which has been reduced after 52 weeks in hospital;

A person who would be liable to pay the flat rate but his net weekly income, inclusive of any prescribed benefit pension or allowance and any prescribed benefit that he or his partner receive, is less than £5.00 per week; and

A person who would be liable to pay the flat-rate, because they or their partner are in receipt of a prescribed benefit, but they have shared care of the qualifying child for at least 52 nights per year.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much the Child Support Agency has paid in redress payments in each year since it was set up. [174600]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to my hon. Friend with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. David Kidney, dated 1 June 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much the Child Support Agency has paid in redress payments in each year since it was set up.

No audited figures are available for the year to 31 March 1994. In years that followed the Agency has paid the following amounts by way of redress:

Year to 31 March	*Amount (£)*
1995	173,000
1996	174,000
1997	656,000
1998	1,101,000
1999	4,351,000
2000	3,075,000
2001	3,053,000
2002	2,590,000
2003	2,478,000

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the status is of the Department's contract with EDS for the Child Support Agency's new computer system; what changes have been made to the contractual terms; and what compensation he has secured from EDS. [174606]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. David Kidney, dated 1 June 2004:

I reply to your recent Parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the current status is of the Department's contract with EDS for the Child Support Agency's new computer system; what changes have been made to the contractual terms; and what compensation he has secured from EDS.

The contract between the Department and EDS remains in effect. The last significant change to the terms of this contract was made in December 2002. In his Child Support Reform Statement to the House on 27 January 2003, the Secretary of State reported as follows:

"The system has proved to be more complex than had been originally thought and we have reached a negotiated agreement with EDS to share these costs, with them meeting their share under the contract. The amount the Government will pay has risen by around 7% over the term of the contract.

"While any extra costs are unwelcome, an increase on this scale is not at all unusual for a complex project of this kind and is justified in order to deliver this important reform."

Any further changes to the contract will be discussed with EDS as necessary, and such discussions would consider the question of compensation, as appropriate.

Council Tax Benefit

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to make available information about council tax benefit eligibility during pension credit assessments. [176226]

Malcolm Wicks: The Pension Service actively promotes awareness of council tax benefit. People who apply for pension credit using the telephone application line are advised that they might be able to receive help with their council tax and are asked whether they would like to be sent a form. Similar questions about council tax benefit are included in the paper application form for pension credit. The local service of the Pension Service promotes awareness at the local level and will help people fill in their council tax benefit claim form. We are considering how to streamline the process further and how the Pension Service can play a greater role in maximising pensioners' income through council tax benefit take-up.

Disability Discrimination Act (Advertising)

Mr. Lyons: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much his Department plans to spend on advertising the introduction of new requirements under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. [176471]

Maria Eagle: The current forecasted expenditure for advertising media to publicise the introduction of the October 2004 duties of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 is £856,662. This advertising is part of a programme of wider communications activity, the total cost of which is forecasted to be £2,545,570.

Compensation Payments

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many compensation payments were made to members of the public by his Department and its agencies in each year since 1997–98, broken down by *(a)* amount paid and *(b)* reason for payment. [172896]

Mr. Pond: The Department for Work and Pensions operates a discretionary, non-statutory scheme providing financial redress for maladministration. Since 1997 financial redress made by the Department and its Agencies have been authorised in the categories set out in the following tables.

(a) Amount of financial redress authorised by category 1997–98 to 2002–03

£000

Type of payment	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Loss of Statutory Entitlement	2,124	1,813	1,748	2,035	2,219	4,039
Actual Financial Loss	1,400	4,215	2,700	2,290	2,172	1,660
Compensation for Delay	1,938	1,541	4,112	5,769	6,537	2,575
Consolatory	110	664	575	758	835	773

(b) Number of payments authorised by category 1997–98 to 2002–03

Type of payment	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Loss of Statutory Entitlement	3,080	1,882	1,660	3,233	2,912	2,764
Actual Financial Loss	4,741	8,782	8,143	7,199	8,243	7,607
Compensation for Delay	5,371	6,347	220,418	16,646	39,620	10,955
Consolatory	497	4,645	5,211	7,553	9,811	9,725

Notes:

1. The Department for Work and Pensions was formed in June 2001. Figures for earlier years relate to the former Department of Social Security.
2. Figures for amounts paid are rounded to the nearest thousand.
3. Loss of statutory entitlement may occur where an individual has lost benefit or some other entitlement as a result of official error.
4. Payments in respect of actual financial loss are made to recompense individuals who have suffered some financial loss or incurred expenses or as a direct result of maladministration.
5. Payments for delay are made in the form of interest and are intended to restore the value of payments that have been excessively or unreasonably delayed.
6. Consolatory payments are made where individuals have suffered gross inconvenience, gross embarrassment or severe distress in consequence of maladministration.

Free Television Licences (Warrington)

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in Warrington North are receiving free television licences. [176412]

Malcolm Wicks: The information requested is not available in the format requested.

The number of households with at least one resident aged 75 or over in the Warrington North parliamentary constituency is 4,815. These households would therefore be eligible to receive a free TV licence.

Notes:

1. Number is rounded to the nearest 5.
2. Any residence found to have four or more occupants is not included in these figures as it is assumed to be a Residential Care or Nursing Home.
3. Parliamentary constituencies have been allocated using the relevant ONS postcode directory.

Source:

IAD Information Centre, WFP data Winter 2003–04 100 per cent. sample.

Passive Smoking (Entertainment Industry)

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the health and safety impact of passive smoking on the health of employees in the entertainment industry; and if he will make a statement. [176634]

Jane Kennedy: None. The Government's Scientific Committee on Tobacco and Health (SCOTH) is currently undertaking a review of the scientific evidence generated since 1998 on the ill health effects of second-hand smoking. The findings of that review are expected shortly.

All employers, including those in the entertainment industry, have a duty under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 to protect the health, safety and welfare of their employees. This duty extends to risks arising from second-hand smoking. Free guidance published by the Health and Safety Executive provides advice to employers on introducing effective smoking policies in the workplace. The guidance recommends that policies should give priority to the needs of non-smokers who do not wish to breathe tobacco smoke.

Pension Credit (Mortgage Assistance)

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions which mortgage lenders' interest rates his Department takes into account when it sets the standard interest rate for mortgage assistance under pension credit. [176207]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is as follows:

Nationwide
Britannia
Yorkshire
Portman
Coventry
Skipton
Chelsea
Leeds and Holbeck
Derbyshire

West Bromwich
Norwich and Peterborough
Cheshire
Principality
Newcastle
Dunfermline
Nottingham
Stroud and Swindon
Cumberland
Lambeth
Scarborough
National Counties
Leek United
Furness

Notes:
1. Information provided to DWP in May 2004.
2. The standard interest rate is calculated by the Financial Services Authority and published monthly by the Office, for National Statistics in "Financial Statistics", Table 7.1L

Pensioners

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners were living in poverty in each of the last 25 years. [175070]

Malcolm Wicks: Poverty and social exclusion are complex and multi-dimensional issues, affecting many aspects of peoples' lives—including their living standards, health, housing, the quality of their environment and not just low income. The fifth annual "Opportunity for All" report (Cm 5956) sets out the Government's strategy for tackling poverty and social exclusion and presents information on the indicators used to measure progress against this strategy.

Between 1979 and 1996, there was growing inequality between the richest and poorest pensioners. Our efforts since 1997 ensure that Government money is targeted and as a result income growth for pensioners has been much more evenly spread.

By 2002–03, there were 1.8 million fewer pensioners in absolute low income measured against a 1996–97 baseline. Over the same period the number of pensioners in relative low income (on an after housing costs basis) has fallen by half a million. These figures are for 2002–03 and so do not yet reflect the effects of the pension credit.

Further information showing the proportion and number of pensioners living in low income households going back to 1979 can be found in the publication, "Households Below Average Income 1994–95 to 2002–03", a copy of which can be found in the Library.

Notes:
1. The estimates are taken from the Department for Work and Pensions' publication, "Households Below Average Income" (HBAI) series, which uses disposable household income, adjusted for household size and composition, as an income measure as a proxy for standard of living. There is no consistent time series using a single data source over the last 25 years for the number of pensioners below low income thresholds. A consistent time series is only available from 1994–95.
2. Absolute low income in the answer is measured using the number of pensioners living in households with equivalised incomes less than 60 per cent. of the 1996–97 median income held constant in real terms using the 'before housing costs' income measure reported in HBAI.
3. '60 per cent. of median' is the most commonly used measure of low income and is linked with the PSA target on child poverty. HBAI also classifies households in low income using differing fractions of mean and median income, and reports figures both on a before and after housing costs basis.
4. The income measure used is mean weekly net (disposable) equivalised household income, consistent with HBAI conventions. Income is adjusted to reflect the composition of the household, and is net of income tax, national insurance contributions and council tax.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of pensioners aged over 80 years receive the age addition to their pension. [175231]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not available in the format requested. Such information as is available is that there are 2,574,600 State Pension recipients aged 80 and over who are also in receipt of the age addition. This represents 95.3 per cent. of all State Pension recipients over the age of 80.

Note:
Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.

Source:
IAD Information Centre, 5 per cent. sample taken from the Pension Strategy Computer System as at 30 September 2003.

Public Bodies

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) on what date each of the public bodies that come under the remit of his Department were established; [172893]

(2) if he will list the reports received by his Department from public bodies in each of the last seven years. [172894]

Maria Eagle: The information is in the table:

Body	*Date established*	*Reports received by the Department 1997–2004*[1]
Disability Employment Advisory Committee	August 2002	First Annual Report due later this year
Disability Living Allowance Advisory Board	September 1991	Annual Report received for each year
Disability Rights Commission[2]	July 1999 (operational from April 2000)	Annual Report received for each year since 2001 *Additional Reports 2003* Disability Equality: Making it Happen—First Review of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
Health and Safety Commission[3]	July 1974	Annual Report received for each year
Health and Safety Executive	July 1974	Annual Report received for each year
Industrial Injuries Advisory Council	1946 (operational from July 1948)	Annual Report received each year since 1998

Body	Date established	Reports received by the Department 1997–2004[1]
		Additional Reports 1999 Diseases Induced by Ionising and Non-ionising Radiation *Additional Reports 2000* Chronic Bronchitis and Emphysema in Underground Coal Miners *Additional Reports 2002* Conditions due to Chemical Agents Occupational Deafness *Additional Reports 2003* Conditions due to Biological Agents Osteoarthritis of the Hip The Neurobehavioral Effects of Chronic Exposure to Organic Solvents *Additional Reports 2004* Stress at Work as a Prescribed Disease and Post-traumatic Stress Disorder
National Employment Panel	October 2001 (initially established as the New Deal Task Force in July 1997)	First Annual Report due later this year *Additional Reports—New Deal Task Force 1998* Meeting the Needs of Disadvantaged Young People Lasting Value: Recommendations for Increasing Retention Within the New Deal *Additional Reports—New Deal Task Force 1999* Design for Success: Recommendations for Engaging Sheffield Employers in the New Deal Bridges to Work: New Directions for Intermediaries London Employers' Coalition: First Anniversary Report Going Public: Opening up New Deal Opportunities in the Public Sector *Additional Reports— New Deal Task Force 2000* Improving the Employment Prospects of Low Income Job Seekers (main report) Improving the Employment Prospects of Low Income Job Seekers (case studies) London Employers' Coalition: Second Annual Report *Additional Reports—New Deal Task Force 2001* Secure Transitions: Building on the Success of the New Deal for Lone Parents Business on Board: Recommendations for Increasing Employer Engagement in New Deal Promising Practice Guide to New Deal Recruitment in the NHS in London *Additional Reports— New Deal Task Force 2002* London Employer Coalition Annual Report 2001–02 Tyneside Employer Coalition New Deal *Additional Reports—National Employment Panel 2002* Contact Centre—a Good Call: Employment Opportunities in the Contact Centre *Additional Reports—National Employment Panel 2003* Tyne and Wear Employer Coalition Annual Report 2002 London Employer Coalition: Annual Report 2002–03 Work Works: the Final Report of the NEP Steering Group on Lone Parents The NEP Employer Coalitions: Engaging Local Employers in Welfare to Work *Additional Reports—National Employment Panel 2004* Tyne and Wear Employer Coalition Annual Report 2003 South Yorkshire Employment Coalition Annual Report: Putting You in the Picture 2003 London Employer Coalition: Annual Report 2003–04 A New Deal for All: Report of the NEP Working Group on New Deal 25+ SME Lambeth, Southwark and Wandsworth Report: Pilot Project Independent Benchmark Report Skills: Welfare to Workforce Development Ambition Stocktake: An Interim Report on the Development and Progress of the Ambition Initiative Fair Cities: Employer Lead Efforts that Produce Results for Ethnic Minorities NEP: Leading Change, Changing Lives Small Employers, Big Opportunities: Practical No-nonsense Advice on How to do Better Business with Small Employers
Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority	April 1996 (operational from April 1997)	Annual Report received for each year
Pensions Compensation Board	April 1997	Annual Report received for each year
Pensions Ombudsman	April 1991	Annual Report received for each year
Remploy Ltd.[4]	1946	Annual Report received for each year
Social Security Advisory Committee	November 1980	Annual Report received for each year *Additional Reports 1997* The Draft Social Security (Incapacity for Work and Severe Disablement Allowance) Amendment Regulations 1997 The Social Security (Social Fund and Claims and Payments) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 1997 The Social Security (Miscellaneous Amendments) (No. 2) Regulations 1997 The Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit (General) Amendment Regulations 1997 The Social Security (Lone Parents) (Amendment) Regulations 1997

Body	Date established	Reports received by the Department 1997–2004[1]
		Additional Reports 1998
		The Jobseeker's Allowance (Amendment) Regulations 1998
		The Social Security Contributions Amendment (No. 2) Regulations 1998
		Additional Reports 1999 The Social Security (Contributions) Amendment Regulations 1999
		The Jobseeker's Allowance (Amendment) Regulations 2000
		The Housing Benefit (General) Amendment (No. 3) Regulations 1999
		Additional Reports 2000
		The Draft Social Security Amendment (Students) Regulations 2000
		Additional Reports 2001
		The Social Security (Claims and Payments) Amendment Regulations 2001
		The Draft Social Security (Literacy etc. Skills Training Pilot) Regulations 2001
		Additional Reports 2002
		The Social Security (Disability Living Allowance) (Amendment) Regulations 2002
		Additional Reports 2003
		The Housing Benefit (General) Amendment Regulations 2003
		The Housing Benefit (General) (Local Housing Allowance) Amendment Regulations 2003
		The (draft) Social Security (Incapacity Benefit Work-focused Interviews) Regulations 2003
		Additional Reports 2004
		The Draft Social Security (Basic Skills Training Pilot) Regulations 2004
		The Social Security (Habitual Residence) Amendment Regulations 2004

[1] The Department for Work and Pensions was formed from the former Department of Social Security and the Employment Service following machinery of government changes in July 2001.
[2] The Disability Rights Commission was previously sponsored by the Department for Education and Employment—now the Department for Education and Skills. Sponsorship passed to the Department for Work and Pensions following machinery of government changes in July 2001.
[3] The Health and Safety Commission and Health and Safety Executive were previously sponsored by the Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions—now the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Department of Transport. Sponsorship passed to the Department for Work and Pensions following machinery of government changes in July 2002.
[4] Remploy Ltd. was previously sponsored by the Department for Education and Employment—now the Department for Education and Skills. Sponsorship passed to the Department for Work and Pensions following machinery of government changes in July 2001.

State Pensions

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much has been spent on state pensions in each of the past 25 years, expressed in real terms. [175008]

Malcolm Wicks: The information has been placed in the Library.

Winter Fuel Allowance (Warrington)

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in Warrington North are receiving the winter fuel allowance; and how many of those in receipt of the allowance qualify for the higher rate of allowance payable to the over 80s. [176408]

Malcolm Wicks: For winter 2003–04 17,230 pensioners in the Warrington North constituency received Winter Fuel Payments. Of those 3,105 were aged 80 or over and have received the higher rate.

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest 5.
2. Figures quoted are the latest available based on payments made.

Source:
IAD Information Centre, 100 per cent. sample.

TREASURY

Exports (Military Equipment)

Harry Cohen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of visible exports was accounted for by identified military equipment, including aerospace equipment, in each year from 1999 to 2003. [176445]

John Healey: Figures for total visible exports are published by HM Customs and Excise in 'Overseas Trade Statistics'. Data on identified aerospace and other military equipment are published by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in their Annual Report on Strategic Export Controls. Copies of these documents are available in the Library of the House.

The percentage of visible exports accounted for by identified military equipment, including aerospace equipment, for the years 1999 to 2002 are shown in the following table. Figures for 2003 are not yet available.

Identified Military Equipment as a proportion of all exports[1]

	Percentage
1999	0.6
2000	0.8
2001	0.8
2002	0.5

[1] Including trade between EU member states.

Source:
Overseas Trade Statistics, HMCE; Strategic Export Controls-Annual Report, FCO

Gun Trafficking

Ms Abbott: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to reassess procedures for clearance of parcels entering the United Kingdom via private companies. [175543]

John Healey: HM Customs and Excise operate import controls at UK ports of entry and international postal depots for goods and packages entering the

UK from outside the European Union, within the framework of EU customs procedures established by agreement with our European partners.

The European Commission is currently reviewing the customs declaration procedures for the import and export of small consignments, and has issued a proposal intended to align more closely the customs procedures currently used by express couriers and the Royal Mail. Customs are consulting with both private and national carriers about the implications of these proposals.

Gershon Review

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 1 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1677W, on the Gershon Review, when he expects the first reductions in the number of civil servants to be made as a result of the Gershon Review. [176514]

John Healey: All Departments continue to work closely with Sir Peter Gershon to prepare detailed efficiency proposals for consideration in the 2004 Spending Review. Departments' agreed efficiency targets, including details of any workforce reductions, will be published in parallel with the Spending Review settlement.

GEC/BAE/Govan Shipyard

Mr. Blunt: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what *(a)* his and *(b)* his officials' involvement was in informal and oral approaches made to GEC over the purchase of Govan shipyard in 1999; [R] [174262]

(2) what meetings took place between *(a)* Mr. Ed Miliband and *(b)* Treasury officials and Mr. Martin Sixsmith in 1999; and what the dates of the meetings were; [174298]

(3) what briefings he gave in 1999 on the GEC interest in the Govan shipyard; and what the dates of the briefings were; [174299]

(4) what briefings his Department gave in 1999 on the GEC interest in the Govan shipyard; [R] [174264]

(5) on what date his Department received the minutes of the meeting between Mr. George Simpson of GEC and the Prime Minister to discuss the merger of BAE and GEC; [R] [174265]

(6) what meetings Treasury officials had with the taskforce chaired by Sir Gavin Laird set up by the Government to look for potential buyers for the Govan shipyard in 1999; and what the dates of the meetings were; [174300]

(7) what meetings his Department had with Sir Gavin Laird to discuss the future of the Govan shipyard in 1999; and on what dates; [174301]

(8) on which dates in 1999 he met Mr. George Simpson of GEC; if he will publish minutes of the meetings; and if he will list the attendees at those meetings; [174295]

(9) what communications *(a)* he and *(b)* his representatives and advisers had with GEC in 1999 over (i) the proposed merger of BAE-GEC and (ii) Govan shipyard; and if he will publish the communications; [174296]

(10) what meetings *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its representatives and advisers had with the management of Govan/Kvaerner to discuss the future of the Govan shipyard in 1999; [174302]

(11) what communications *(a)* he and *(b)* his representatives and advisers had with Kvaerner, their representatives and advisers over the proposed closure of the Govan shipyard in 1999; and if he will publish the communications; [174297]

(12) what role *(a)* he and *(b)* his representatives, and advisers had in the negotiations over the future of Govan in 1999. [174303]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Member to the answer which he received from the Prime Minister on 25 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1522W.

Mr. Blunt: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his Department's involvement was in approving the GEC-BAE merger in 1999. [R] [174263]

John Healey: The decision was made by the then Secretary of State for Trade and Industry in his capacity set out in the Fair Trading Act 1973.

Income Tax

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the revenue produced by an additional one pence on the rate of income tax in each London borough and metropolitan authority. [176231]

Dawn Primarolo: The requested information is given in the table:

Additional full-year yield by an additional one pence on the starting, basic and higher rate of income tax[1] in London boroughs and metropolitan districts in 2001–02

	£ million
London Borough	
City of London	8.9
Barking and Dagenham	7.1
Barnet	35.6
Bexley	17.7
Brent	18.6
Bromley	33.3
Camden	33.6
Croydon	26.0
Ealing	26.1
Enfield	21.1
Greenwich	16.0
Hackney	11.6
Hammersmith and Fulham	24.4
Haringey	18.7
Harrow	19.5
Havering	17.7
Hillingdon	19.3
Hounslow	17.5
Islington	21.2
Kensington and Chelsea	49.7
Kingston upon Thames	15.8
Lambeth	22.4
Lewisham	17.5
Merton	20.6
Newham	10.6
Redbridge	20.4
Richmond upon Thames	30.5
Southwark	18.6
Sutton	16.2

Additional full-year yield by an additional one pence on the starting, basic and higher rate of income tax[1] in London boroughs and metropolitan districts in 2001–02

	£ million
Tower Hamlets	17.6
Waltham Forest	14.1
Wandsworth	40.1
Westminster	42.0
Greater Manchester	
Bolton	14.6
Bury	11.0
Manchester	16.7
Oldham	10.8
Rochdale	9.7
Salford	11.8
Stockport	21.2
Tameside	10.6
Trafford	18.2
Wigan	16.5
Merseyside	
Knowsley	6.1
Liverpool	19.7
St. Helens	10.2
Sefton	16.9
Wirral	19.9
South Yorkshire	
Barnsley	10.5
Doncaster	15.5
Rotherham	14.2
Sheffield	28.7
Tyne and Wear	
Gateshead	9.9
Newcastle upon Tyne	15.0
North Tyneside	10.8
South Tyneside	6.7
Sunderland	13.2
West Midlands	
Birmingham	48.3
Coventry	16.0
Dudley	16.5
Sandwell	12.2
Solihull	18.4
Walsall	11.9
Wolverhampton	11.4
West Yorkshire	
Bradford	26.6
Calderdale	13.4
Kirklees	23.2
Leeds	44.4
Wakefield	17.5

[1] The 'savers' and dividends tax rates have been left unchanged for this analysis.

Estimates are based upon the 2001–02 Survey of Personal Incomes. The effects of the illustrative changes can be scaled up or down over a reasonably wide range. The results exclude any behavioural response to the tax change.

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many senior citizens in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood qualified for the 10p rate of income tax in each year since its introduction. [176402]

Dawn Primarolo: All income taxpayers benefit from the 10p starting rate. The Survey of Personal Incomes estimates there are about 9,000 and 10,000 state retirement pension age taxpayers in the Blackpool, North and Fleetwood constituency in 2000–01 and 2001–02 respectively. However, year on year comparisons should be treated with caution because of sampling variation. Figures for 1999–2000 are currently not available.

Repairs (VAT)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will reduce the level of VAT on repairs and maintenance to five per cent. [175933]

John Healey: EU Member States are permitted to introduce reduced rates of VAT only on a prescribed list of goods and services set out in Annex H of the EC Sixth VAT Directive. A review of this list is currently underway and we have been negotiating hard for the inclusion of repairs to listed places of worship.

The current list includes a category for the "supply, construction, renovation and alteration of housing provided as part of a social policy". The Government have used this provision to target relief at areas of specific need, such as certain residential conversions and the renovation of housing that has been empty for more than three years.

The European Commission has made proposals to clarify the housing provision by removing the distinction that housing should be provided as part of a social policy and by specifying the inclusion of the repair and maintenance of housing. If that proposal were agreed, we would examine the potential costs and benefits of applying a wider relief in the UK, focusing on those measures which offer the best targeted and most efficient support for our key social objectives.

Staffing (Inland Revenue and Customs and Excise)

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many staff were employed by *(a)* the Inland Revenue and *(b)* HM Customs and Excise at 24 May; [176405]

(2) pursuant to his answer of 6 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1737W, on efficiency gains, what the baseline employment figures in *(a)* the Inland Revenue and *(b)* HM Customs and Excise are for the job reductions listed. [176545]

John Healey: The latest available employment figures for the Inland Revenue and HM Customs and Excise are published in table 5.2 of the Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2004 (Cm 6201).

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what discussions he has had with Mr. David Varney regarding the timescale for the *(a)* commencement and *(b)* completion of the reduction of 14,000 civil servants in the Inland Revenue and HM Customs and Excise; and what the outcome of those discussions was; [176515]

(2) what targets he has given Mr. David Varney for the *(a)* commencement and *(b)* completion of the reduction of 14,000 civil servants in the Inland Revenue and HM Customs and Excise; [176516]

(3) pursuant to his answer of 6 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1737W, on efficiency gains, when he expects the first of these job reductions to be made. [176544]

John Healey: Detailed plans for the realisation of efficiency savings are under discussion and agreed efficiency targets will be announced in Spending Review 2004.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Business (Blackpool and Fleetwood)

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government have taken to help small businesses in Blackpool North and Fleetwood since 1997. [175885]

Nigel Griffiths: The Business Link Operator for North and West Lancashire has provided assistance to 2,499 enterprises in the Blackpool and Fylde constituency since 2001. Statistics are not available specifically for Blackpool, North and Fleetwood. The Small Business Service was set up as an agency of the Department of Trade and Industry in April 2000. Contracts were exchanged with a national network of 45 Business Link Operators (seven in the North West) to provide Business Support to small and medium sized enterprises from April 2001. Before this date Government Support to business was provided through Training and Enterprise Councils and the SBS does not have access to these data.

The type of assistance received from the Business Link include, Pre-startups, start-ups, IT support, Investors in People, International and Business Support.

Under the Research and Development Scheme (R and D) one company has received offers of grant with a total value of £30,000, in the Blackpool, North and Fleetwood constituency since 1997.

Under the Enterprise Grant Scheme (EGS) one company has received offers of grant with a total of £10,000, in the Blackpool, North and Fleetwood constituency since 1997.

Business Regulation

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 5 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1178W, on business regulation, how many of the regulatory impact assessments referred to have since been placed in the Library, including their reference numbers. [174859]

Nigel Griffiths: Six in relation to DTI.

Reference number	*Title*
RIA 04/005	The Companies Act 1985 (Accounts of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises and Audit Exemption) (Amendment) Regulations 2004 1. The Audit Exemption Threshold
RIA 04/006	The Companies Act 1985 (Accounts of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises and Audit Exemption) (Amendment) Regulations 2004 2. The Thresholds defining Small and Medium-Sized Companies
RIA 04/008	The Patents Act 1977 (Amendment) Bill
RIA 04/011	Revision of Price Marking Order 1999
RIA 04/013	Statutory Dispute Resolution Procedures
RIA 04/015	The Regulatory Reform (Sunday Trading) Order 2004

Coal Compensation Schemes

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the Department's policy is on a defined claimant's representative receiving a fee for passing on a claim to another solicitor in coal compensation cases. [176108]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* The Government have separately funded over £353 million for solicitor's fees to ensure that no miner has to lose any compensation. The professional conduct of solicitors is a matter for the Law Society.

Correspondence

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what action she plans to take to improve the response rate of *(a)* Ministers in her Department and *(b)* chief executives of agencies for which she is responsible to correspondence from hon. Members and peers. [176351]

Ms Hewitt: The correspondence performance of Agencies for which I am responsible is already excellent.

My officials are introducing new management and other systems to improve the overall response rate.

Early Retirement

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many employees in her Department took early retirement, and at what total cost, in the last financial year. [172184]

Ms Hewitt: 27 employees took early retirement costing £1,033,259.

Employers (Good Practice)

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment her Department has made of the proportion of employers who *(a)* fail to comply with legislation and *(b)* use good practice regarding (i) equality of opportunity and (ii) human rights. [175146]

Ms Hewitt: There are no formal assessments of the above compliance levels. As far as equality for opportunity is concerned, we would need to obtain information from Employment Tribunals and the Courts which could be done only at disproportionate cost and would not provide a complete picture.

Nevertheless, the Government are committed to ensuring compliance across the equality agenda, and, in respect of the public sector or public sector services, compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998. Many of our leading businesses already recognise the benefits of equality of opportunity in the workplace and we are working with them to disseminate good practice more widely. There are also many examples of good practice in the public sector. We expect the proposed Commission for Equality and Human Rights to take a prominent role in furthering the adoption of good practice in the private and public sectors.

Equality and Human Rights Commission

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the projected budget is of the new Equality and Human Rights Commission in its first year of operation. [174701]

Ms Hewitt: The Government are committed to ensuring that the CEHR is properly and adequately resourced. Funding for the CEHR will be addressed in line with the Government process for financial planning for the next three years that is currently under way.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment has been made of the staffing levels that will be required by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. [174704]

Ms Hewitt: No assessment has been made as to projected staffing levels in the proposed Commission for Equality and Human Rights. This will be a matter to be addressed as planning for the CEHR progresses.

Export Credits Guarantee Department

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what account is taken of offset deals when deciding *(a)* whether and *(b)* to what extent Export Credits Guarantee Department support should be offered in defence contracts. [176219]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Offset transactions normally take the form of procuring exports from or investments in the overseas' purchaser's country. These are entirely commercial arrangements between the contractor and the overseas purchaser and would not influence ECGD's decision on support for a defence, or any other, contract.

ECGD's policy on support for specific transactions falling within a UK company's offset obligations is covered in a previous answer on 23 May 2002, *Official Report*, column 479W.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what Export Credits Guarantee Department support was given to *(a)* defence and *(b)* aerospace exports to the Czech Republic in the five years up to 31 March. [176220]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: None.

Flue Gas Desulphurised Power Stations

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what action has been taken against social dumping by Belgian contractors of EDF in the engineering construction of new flue gas desulphurised power stations in the UK; and if she will make a statement. [176439]

Mr. Timms: I cannot comment on individual commercial contracts. Provided that statutory minima are met, terms and conditions of employment are a matter for negotiation and agreement between employers and employees (or their representatives) and are not a matter for Government intervention. All employees legally working in the UK, whether temporary or permanently, are entitled to statutory minimum terms and conditions of employment such as the national minimum wage and EDF has confirmed to me that its contracts fully reflect this.

Imports

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what proportion of the United Kingdom's *(a)* visible and *(b)* invisible imports came from the European Union in the last 12 months for which figures are available; and what their value was. [176672]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: According to figures published by the Office for National Statistics in the Balance of Payments first release on 26 March 2004, in 2003 UK imports of goods from the European Union were worth £129 billion, representing 55 per cent. of the total. Imports of services were worth £35 billion, representing 48 per cent. of the total.

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what proportion of the United Kingdom's *(a)* visible and *(b)* invisible exports went to the European Union in the last 12 months for which figures are available; and what their value was. [176673]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: According to figures published by the Office for National Statistics in the Balance of Payments first release on 26 March 2004, in 2003 UK exports of goods to the European Union were worth £105 billion, representing 56 per cent. of the total. Exports of services were worth £32 billion, representing 36 per cent. of the total.

National Minimum Wage

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 1 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1592–94W, on the National Minimum Wage, for what average length of time compliance officers identified the National Minimum Wage was being underpaid in 2003–04. [173960]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 18 May 2004]:* This information is not readily available at the moment. However, the Inland Revenue, who enforce the minimum wage on behalf of the DTI, are about to undertake a sampling exercise on successful cases and we will write to the hon. Member with further details when the exercise has been completed at the end of June.

Nuclear Energy

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement about progress made on nuclear fusion research; and what Q ratio of input energy to output has been achieved. [174808]

Mr. Timms: The Joint European Torus (JET) based at Culham in Oxfordshire has achieved an input energy to output ratio of Q=1. An international partnership has come together to build the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) which is expected to achieve a ratio of Q=10 and beyond.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on *(a)* matters discussed and *(b)* agreements made in respect of nuclear power during the recent visit of the Minister for Energy, E-Commerce and Postal Services

to Japan; and if she will place in the Library copies of papers or documents provided to (i) the Japanese nuclear industry and (ii) Japanese Government officials during his visit. [176381]

Mr. Timms: During my recent visit to Japan I held wide-ranging discussions on telecommunications and energy issues, including nuclear and BNFL related issues with Japanese interlocutors. I also outlined the changes to the UK nuclear industry described in the Energy Bill.

The nuclear power issues discussed were designed to improve understanding between the UK and Japan and did not give rise to any agreements between our two countries. No papers or documents were provided to either the Japanese nuclear industry or to the Japanese Government.

Public Telephone Boxes

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what public consultation BT is obliged to undertake before it removes public telephone boxes; and if she will make a statement. [175683]

Mr. Timms: The matter raised is the responsibility of the Office of Communications (Ofcom) as independent regulator. Accordingly, my officials have asked the Chief Executive of Ofcom to respond directly to the hon. Member. Copies of the Chief Executive's letter will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Regulatory Impact Unit

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list the European Union Directives her Department was responsible for implementing since 1997 that were *(a)* submitted to and *(b)* discussed by the Regulatory Impact Unit; and whether the proposed method of implementation was identified as going beyond the minimum necessary to comply with the European Directive and represented over-implementation in each case. [176104]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* The Department takes account of Cabinet Office guidance in relation to implementation of European directives and holds discussions with the Regulatory Impact Unit during the process of policy development. However records of these discussions are not held centrally.

Regulatory Reform Action Plan

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list the measures in the Regulatory Reform Action plan that relate to small businesses. [174708]

Nigel Griffiths: The small business friendly measures are highlighted in the Regulatory Reform Action Plan which is available from the Libraries of the House or online at http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/regulation/rrap/index.asp.

Research and Development

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps her Department is taking to develop a national policy and strategy for science, engineering and technology exploitation. [174700]

Ms Hewitt: The recent Innovation Report highlighted the challenge the UK still faces in exploiting its significant science, engineering and technology achievements. In order to rise to this challenge the DTI are leading in the development of a national Technology Strategy to stimulate business demand for new and emerging technologies.

The Strategy will identify technology priorities critical to the growth of the UK economy, matching business needs with what science can achieve. Government and its agencies will use the Strategy to steer investment in UK and European R and D programmes. It will also inform the future development of wider Government activities, such as innovative public procurement.

The Strategy also sits alongside a national policy to address the gender imbalance in science and technology, which included the announcement of a £1.5 million support package. Among other initiatives, this has provided a new science resource centre, officially opening in September 2004, that will encourage female scientists to return to science and more women to pursue successful scientific careers.

This will complement our existing activities in facilitating the exploitation of the science and engineering base through funding to support knowledge transfer activities in Higher Education Institutes (the Higher Education Innovation Fund) and Public Sector Research Establishments (the Public Sector Research Exploitation Fund).

Royal Mail

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of first class letters posted in East Riding of Yorkshire met the Royal Mail's on-time delivery target in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [176066]

Mr. Timms: Performance against delivery targets is an operational matter for the Royal Mail Group and I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Sellafield

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the primary use is of each of the facilities B1 to B100 at BNFL's Sellafield site; whether their status is *(a)* operational, *(b)* closed pending clean-up, *(c)* cleaned-up pending decommissioning, *(d)* decommissioned, *(e)* demolished and *(f)* other; and for those which are planned to be decommissioned, what estimated timescale has been provided by BNFL for their decommissioning. [174005]

Mr. Timms: Information that permits buildings within BNFL's Sellafield site to be located by function is considered to be a matter of national security. It is not Government policy to disclose such information, which could potentially be of use to terrorists. However this policy does not apply to those buildings which are cleaned-up pending decommissioning or have already been decommissioned or demolished. Information on BNFL buildings falling within these categories is as follows:

Facility	Primary use	Status	Estimated decommissioning start date (where available)
B6.1	Decommissioning Office	Demolished	—
B20	Gate House and Vehicle Search	Demolished	—
B24	Police Lodge	Demolished	—
B29.3	Maintenance Workshop	Demolished	—
B30.1	Portable Office	Demolished	—
B30.2	Portable Office	Demolished	—
B32	Bus Park North Gate	Demolished	—
B80.3	Temporary Offices	Demolished	—
B80.4	Temporary Offices	Demolished	—
B80.5	Temporary Offices	Demolished	—
B80.6	Portable Office	Demolished	—
B80.7	Portable Office	Demolished	—
B80.8	Portable Office	Demolished	—
B80.9	Portable Office	Demolished	—
B80.10	Portable Office	Demolished	—
B80.11	Portable Office	Demolished	—
B80.12	Portable Office	Demolished	—
B80.13	Portable Office	Demolished	—
B81	Police Lodge	Demolished	—
B89	Police Lodge	Demolished	—

Spam

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what legislative measures her Department proposes to take against spam; and if she will make a statement on the estimated cost of spam to British businesses. [176612]

Mr. Timms: The Government have implemented the EU Directive on Electronic Communications by introducing the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations in December 2003 under which the sending of unsolicited direct marketing (spam) e-mails to individual subscribers is prohibited. For corporate subscribers the regulations are slightly different. Direct marketing companies are required to ensure that the identify of the sender is clearly stated in the e-mail with a valid address, which the recipient can use to request that further e-mails are not sent to them.

The Government do not have an estimate of the cost to British business of unsolicited direct marketing (spam) e-mails. The UK is involved in a current exercise conducted by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, which aims to develop better techniques for measuring spam and estimating its impact.

Stem Cell/Embryo Research

Barbara Follett: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what proportion of the Medical Research Council's 2004–05 funding is devoted to stem cell and embryonic research. [176084]

Ms Hewitt: The MRC received £26 million of the £40 million made available by the Government in the 2002 spending review for research into stem cells. £12.6 million has been awarded so far. Other embryonic and/or stem cell research may also be supported by MRC via responsive mode funding during 2004–05.

It is not possible to calculate what proportion of the Council's income will be spent on any area of research as MRC has not yet made all the funding decisions for 2004–05.

HEALTH

Contraception

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years were fitted with a contraception implant in each year since 2000, broken down by strategic health authority; and if he will make a statement; [174528]

(2) how many attendances at family planning clinics by young people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) strategic health authority and (ii) sex; and if he will make a statement. [174529]

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many attendances at family planning clinics by people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in the Essex Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000, broken down by sex; [174575]

(2) how many women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years were fitted with a contraceptive implant in the Essex Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000. [174577]

Sir Teddy Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many attendances at family planning clinics by people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in the Essex Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000, broken down by sex; [174509]

(2) how many women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years were fitted with a contraceptive implant in the Essex Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000. [174516]

Mrs. Roe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many attendances at family planning clinics by people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000, broken down by sex; [174878]

(2) how many women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years were fitted with a contraceptive implant in the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000. [174890]

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many attendances at family clinics by people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in the Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000, broken down by sex; [174949]

(2) how many women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years were fitted with a contraceptive implant in the Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000. [174956]

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years were fitted with a contraceptive implant in the Thames Valley Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000; [175383]

(2) how many attendances at family planning clinics by people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in the Thames Valley Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000, broken down by sex. [175390]

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many attendances at family planning clinics by people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in the Dorset and Somerset Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000, broken down by sex; [175623]

(2) how many women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years were fitted with a contraceptive implant in the Dorset and Somerset Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000. [175628]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 25 May 2004]:* I refer the hon. Members to the reply I gave to my hon. Friends the Members for Workington (Tony Cunningham) and for Heywood and Middleton (Jim Dobbin) today.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many girls aged *(a)* under 14 and *(b)* under 16 have been given the Norplant contraceptive injection in each of the last five years for which statistics are available. [167258]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not available.

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many attendances at family planning clinics by people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 there were in West Cumbria in each year since 2000, broken down by sex; [175418]

(2) how many women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years were fitted with a contraceptive implant in the West Cumbria Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000. [175517]

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many women of 19 years and under were fitted with a contraceptive implant in the Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000, broken down by age; [175766]

(2) how many attendances at family planning clinics by people of 19 years and under there were in Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000, broken down by *(a)* sex and *(b)* age. [175784]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The available information is shown in the tables. Information by age is only collected centrally for women on their first attendances during the year (first contacts) at family planning clinics and for contraceptive implants fitted by family planning clinics. Totals only are shown for women under 20 due to small numbers.

In England we are taking a number of steps, through the Government's national strategy for sexual health and HIV and teenage pregnancy strategy, to reduce the rate of unintended pregnancy. The Government are working to improve access to contraceptive services and the range of methods of contraception that are available and to improve sex and relationships education. The number of family planning sessions aimed at young people has increased to tackle high levels of teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections. We have also established a group of key experts to develop an action plan to support the improvement of contraceptive services at local level.

Women aged under 20 attending family planning clinics whose main method of contraception was a contraceptive implant, by strategic health authority (SHA), 2000-01 to 2002-03

SHA		2000-01	2001-02	2002-03
	England	470	740	1,350
Q01	Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	20	30	90
Q02	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	10	20	30
Q03	Essex	20	0	0
Q04	North West London	0	10	10
Q05	North Central London	0	30	20
Q06	North East London	0	10	10
Q07	South East London	20	0	20
Q08	South West London	10	10	20
Q09	Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	70	60	220
Q10	County Durham and Tees Valley	10	10	30
Q11	North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	20	30	80
Q12	West Yorkshire	40	60	70
Q13	Cumbria and Lancashire	10	10	20
Q14	Greater Manchester	10	20	40
Q15	Cheshire and Merseyside	10	20	40
Q16	Thames Valley	20	20	40
Q17	Hampshire and Isle of Wight	10	10	30
Q18	Kent and Medway	0	10	40
Q19	Surrey and Sussex	50	90	80
Q20	Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	20	20	50
Q21	South West Peninsula	40	60	70
Q22	Dorset and Somerset	10	10	20
Q23	South Yorkshire	10	20	50
Q24	Trent	60	70	140

Women aged under 20 attending family planning clinics whose main method of contraception was a contraceptive implant, by strategic health authority (SHA), 2000–01 to 2002–03

SHA		2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
Q25	Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	10	20	50
Q26	Shropshire and Staffordshire	0	20	30
Q27	Birmingham and the Black Country	0	10	20
Q28	Coventry, Warwickshire, Hereford and Worcestershire	20	70	50

Note:
Figures rounded to nearest 10; 0 indicates less than 5.
Source:
Statistics Division, Department of Health.

Women aged under 20 attending family planning clinics whose main method of contraception was a contraceptive implant, by age, England, 2000–01 to 2002–03

	Under 15	15	16–19
2000–01	20	50	400
2001–02	20	60	650
2002–03	60	100	1,190

Note:
Figures rounded to nearest 10.
Source:
Statistics Division, Department of Health.

First contacts at family planning clinics with women aged under 20 by age and strategic health authority (SHA), 2000–01 to 2002–03

Thousand

SHA		2000–01			2001–02			2002–03		
		Under 15	15	16–19	Under 15	15	16–19	Under 15	15	16–19
	England	28.2	46.2	270.5	31.6	48.3	264.3	33.5	51.5	268.1
Q01	Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	0.7	1.3	8.9	0.8	1.3	8.1	0.7	1.4	8.3
Q02	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	0.4	0.6	5.2	0.4	0.7	5.5	0.4	0.7	5.7
Q03	Essex	0.6	1.2	8.4	0.5	1.0	6.7	0.6	1.2	7.3
Q04	North West London	0.4	0.8	7.9	0.5	0.8	7.7	0.4	0.8	6.7
Q05	North Central London	0.3	0.6	6.8	0.4	0.9	7.0	0.3	1.0	7.0
Q06	North East London	0.3	1.2	7.6	0.5	1.0	6.8	0.7	1.0	7.7
Q07	South East London	1.4	2.6	18.7	1.3	2.4	16.2	1.3	2.2	14.2
Q08	South West London	0.5	1.7	7.6	0.5	1.6	6.9	0.5	1.1	6.1
Q09	Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	1.8	2.3	8.9	2.2	2.4	9.6	2.5	3.0	9.2
Q10	County Durham and Tees Valley	0.9	1.4	6.8	1.0	1.5	6.7	1.1	1.4	6.4
Q11	North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	0.8	1.3	7.2	1.5	1.7	7.8	1.5	2.0	8.4
Q12	West Yorkshire	1.3	2.2	11.4	1.4	2.4	12.2	1.4	2.5	12.0
Q13	Cumbria and Lancashire	0.9	1.6	8.0	1.1	1.9	8.7	1.3	2.1	9.3
Q14	Greater Manchester	2.7	3.9	19.2	3.5	4.4	21.1	3.1	4.2	21.7
Q15	Cheshire and Merseyside	1.7	3.2	21.4	1.7	3.0	21.4	1.9	3.4	21.5
Q16	Thames Valley	0.8	1.4	7.9	0.9	1.5	8.9	1.1	1.6	9.1
Q17	Hampshire and Isle of Wight	1.4	1.8	10.5	1.4	1.9	10.4	1.7	2.2	11.1
Q18	Kent and Medway	0.6	1.2	7.3	0.6	1.4	6.9	0.6	1.3	7.2
Q19	Surrey and Sussex	0.9	1.4	9.0	0.8	1.6	9.5	1.0	2.0	10.8
Q20	Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	0.8	1.4	9.3	0.8	1.3	8.7	0.6	1.6	9.2
Q21	South West Peninsula	0.7	1.1	7.1	1.1	1.4	7.0	1.3	1.8	8.2
Q22	Dorset and Somerset	0.3	0.6	4.1	0.4	0.6	3.7	0.5	0.9	4.1
Q23	South Yorkshire	1.9	1.8	8.1	1.7	1.4	6.4	2.2	2.1	8.3
Q24	Trent	1.9	2.7	12.2	2.2	2.8	12.0	2.0	2.7	11.7
Q25	Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	0.3	0.7	3.9	0.7	1.0	4.3	1.0	1.3	4.1
Q26	Shropshire and Staffordshire	1.1	1.8	8.6	1.1	2.0	8.8	1.2	2.1	8.7
Q27	Birmingham and the Black Country	2.0	3.2	20.4	2.1	3.1	18.3	1.9	3.1	16.8
Q28	Coventry, Warwickshire, Hereford and Worcestershire	0.7	1.2	7.9	0.6	1.1	6.9	0.6	1.1	7.3

Source:
Statistics Division, Department of Health.

Departmental Annual Report

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will publish an update of the data contained in Figure 7.7 of the 2003 Departmental Annual Report, compiled on the same basis. [171544]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 10 May 2004]*: Traditionally, efficiency in the National Health Service has been measured using the cost weighted efficiency index but changes in the way healthcare is delivered now mean that it gives an increasingly incomplete and misleading picture. Therefore, an update was not published in the 2004 Departmental Report.

The main drawbacks of the cost weighted efficiency index are that it:

fails to count a large amount of NHS activity—for example primary care consultations and procedures, nurse led procedures, Family Health Services prescriptions, NHS Direct calls and walk-in centre visits;

takes no account of quality such as better health outcomes, shorter waiting times,singles sex wards or cleaner hospitals;

classifies activity in only 12 activity types and two of which (inpatients and outpatients) account for 85 per cent. of the cost weights. This limits the ability to measure changes in case-mix; and

perversely records shifts in activity from inpatients to outpatients and from outpatients to primary or community care as inefficiency.

The Office for National Statistics is working with the Department as part of the Atkinson Review of Measurement of Government Outputs to develop new measures of NHS productivity. The updated figures for figure 7.7 of the 2003 Departmental Report are shown in the table.

	Hospital and Community Health Services cost weighted activity		*Expenditure adjusted for changes in input unit costs*		*Real terms growth in expenditure*	
Year	*Index*	*Growth (%)*	*Index*	*Growth (%)*	*Index*	*Growth (%)*
1991–92	100.0		100.0		100.0	
1992–93	103.1	3.1	103.1	3.1	106.8	6.8
1993–94	107.2	4.0	104.7	1.6	109.5	2.5
1994–95	111.7	4.2	106.2	1.4	112.3	2.6
1995–96	116.1	4.0	108.1	1.8	115.3	2.6
1996–97	118.0	1.7	109.7	1.5	116.5	1.1
1997–98	120.2	1.8	112.1	2.2	117.5	0.9
1998–99	122.6	2.1	115.4	3.0	122.4	4.1
1999–2000	124.0	1.1	119.7	3.7	129.6	5.9
2000–01	124.7	0.6	125.1	4.5	138.0	6.5
2001–02	124.8	0.1	126.5	1.1	143.0	3.6

Food Supplements

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations he has received on *(a)* the Food Supplements Directive and *(b)* the maximum permitted levels in food supplements; and if he will make a statement. [169747]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In October 2003, I met representatives of the health food industry, at their request, to discuss their concerns over the potential impact of the Food Supplements Directive, particularly relating to the submission of safety dossiers to the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and to the future setting of European maximum levels for vitamins and minerals in food supplements.

In addition, I have received letters about the directive from hon. and right hon. Members on behalf of constituents, as well as letters from industry representatives.

Since last October there was a constructive meeting, facilitated by the Food Standards Agency (FSA), between industry representatives and representatives of the EFSA to discuss safety dossiers. In addition, I have recently set out the Government's views on the setting of maximum limits to European Commissioner David Byrne.

I have stated my willingness to meet food supplement industry representatives again. However, I have suggested that before such a meeting it would be useful for industry technical advisers to meet FSA officials to discuss detailed technical issues relating to dossiers and then for the industry to gain experience of submitting such dossiers to EFSA. In addition, I have asked that industry submits the information, requested by the FSA on my behalf last July, relating to products containing vitamins and minerals and their sources currently missing from the lists of permitted substances in the directive.

Foundation Trusts

Mr. Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the hospitals in the first wave of foundation trusts, giving for each *(a)* the number of patients treated in the last year for which figures are available, *(b)* the local resident population, *(c)* the number of patient electors in the recent election of governors, *(d)* the number of local resident electors and *(e)* the number of (i) patient electors and (ii) local residents who voted in the recent election of governors. [175844]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 26 May 2004]:* Information concerning the number of patients treated by hospitals of the first wave of national health service foundation trusts who were authorised on 1 April 2004 should be obtained from the individual organisations. The hospitals concerned are:

Basildon and Thurrock General Hospital NHS Trust
Bradford Hospitals NHS Trust
Countess of Chester NHS Trust
Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospitals NHS Trust
Homerton University Hospital NHS Trust
Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Trust
Peterborough Hospitals NHS Trust
Royal Devon and Exeter Healthcare NHS Trust
Stockport NHS Trust
The Royal Marsden NHS Trust
Royal Devon and Exeter Healthcare NHS Trust
Stockport NHS Trust
The Royal Marsden NHS Trust

Information concerning the number of patients treated by hospitals in the first wave of NHS foundation trusts who are looking to authorisation from 1 July 2004 has been placed in the Library.

Figures for the local resident population of the first wave of NHS foundation trusts are not collected centrally due to the nature of the commissioning of healthcare. The information provided could be duplicated for other local NHS trusts and would therefore be inaccurate.

Information on elections to the board of governors of NHS foundation trusts is a matter for the Office of the Independent Regulator of NHS foundation trusts. The Chairman will write to the hon. Member and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

GP Surgeries

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the maintenance backlog to reach estate code condition B was in *(a)* England, *(b)* each region and *(c)* each strategic health authority in each year since 1997. [167425]

Mr. Hutton: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 9 February 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1205–06W.

Health Service Premises

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioners' surgeries have been *(a)* modernised and *(b)* removed to other premises in (i) Chorley and (ii) Lancashire since 1997. [172074]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table. Information is only available from 2000–01.

Premises refurbished and replaced	*2000–01*		*2001–02 total*		*2002–03 total*		*Q3 2003–04 year to date total*	
	Number of premises replaced	*Number of premises refurbished*	*Number of premises replaced*	*Number of premises refurbished*	*Number of premises replaced*	*Number of premises refurbished*	*Number of premises replaced*	*Number of premises refurbished*
East Lancashire Health Authority (HA)	2	3	0	5	—	—	—	—
North West Lancashire HA	1	2	1	4	—	—	—	—
South Lancashire HA	1	3	2	4	—	—	—	—
Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care Trust (PCT)	—	—	—	—	0	4	0	0
Blackburn and Darwin PCT	—	—	—	—	0	0	1	2
Blackpool PCT	—	—	—	—	1	1	1	0
Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale PCT	—	—	—	—	0	0	1	3
Fylde PCT	—	—	—	—	0	0	0	2
Hyndburn and Ribble Valley PCT	—	—	—	—	0	0	0	0
Preston PCT	—	—	—	—	0	1	0	1
West Lancashire PCT	—	—	—	—	0	0	0	0
Wyre PCT	—	—	—	—	0	1	0	0
Total	4	8	3	13	1	7	3	8

Source:
Department of Health LDPR Quarterly Returns

Health Services (West Lancashire)

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the level of elective admissions to the NHS in West Lancashire in the last five years. [171549]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 10 May 2004]*: The information requested is shown in the table.

Count of in year elective admissions, 1998–99–2002–03.
PCT code equal to West Lancashire NHS Hospital, England

2002–03	11,044
2001–02	11,551
2000–01	13,085
1999–2000	13,670
1998–99	13,076

Notes:
In Year Admissions
Between the years 2000–01 and 2001–02, a number of National Health Service trusts in the North West reclassified inpatient procedures as outpatients. This has shown itself in apparent falls in activity levels. The majority of residents served by the West Lancashire Primary Care Trust will be referred to the Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust. During this period 3,500 admissions were reclassified from daycases to outpatients at the Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust. An in-year admission is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider, excluding admission beginning before 1 April at the start of the datayear. Periods of care ongoing at the end of the datayear (unfinished admission episodes) are included. However, admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
PCT Code
PCT codes is a derived field providing the Primary Care Trust responsible for the patient. The PCT code is derived from the GP practice with which the patient is registered (GPPRAC) if this is known, or REGGMP, PURCODE or the postcode of the patient.
Ungrossed Data
Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in the data (ie the data are ungrossed).
Source
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health.

Hip Replacement

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the latest average waiting time for a hip replacement operation in the East Riding of Yorkshire is. [171787]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is shown in the table.

Count of Finished Admissions with Mean Time Waited, 2002–03
Main operation = "Hip Replacement" (OPCS-4 codes W37-W39 and W46-W48)
By PCT code (PCT of responsibilty)
NHS Hospitals, England

PCT—Primary care trust code (PCT of responsibility)	*Finished admissions*	*Median Time waited (days)*	*Mean Time waited (days)*
5E3East Yorkshire PCT	120	152	199
5E4 Yorkshire Wolds and Coast PCT	188	217	238
5E5 Eastern Hull PCT	78	143	201
5E6 West Hull PCT	114	84	159

Notes:
Finished admission episodes:
A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
PCT code:
A derived field providing the Primary Care Trust responsible for the patient. The PCTCODE is derived from the GP practice with which the patient is registered (GPPRA) if this is known, or REGGMP, PURCODE or the postcode of the patient.
Ungrossed Data:
Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).
Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health

IT Systems

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate his Department has made of the

amount of staff time required to input data into the databases for the National Programme for Information Technology. [174106]

Mr. Hutton: The national programme for information technology (IT) is implementing a series of IT solutions to improve patient choice and the quality of patient treatment and care. Fundamental to this is the national health service care records service (CRS) that will enable patient care information to be accessed at the point of need anywhere in England. The intention is to ensure that information on a patient is captured once and used operationally across a range of care settings and in support of a care pathway. This saves time for clinicians and avoids patients having to repeat the same information over and over again as they move from department to department or clinician to clinician.

In most cases, information will be transferred automatically from existing local IT systems and Patient Administration Systems into the nationally available NHS CRS. This will be a similar process to what happens with existing systems every time there is a system refresh or upgrade.

The recording of information about patients is part of normal clinical practice, and it is not envisaged that the use of the NHS CRS will require any significant additional effort from NHS staff than with existing processes and systems.

Lung Cancer Screening

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to develop a screening programme for lung cancer in the UK; and what assessment he has made of the possible benefits of a screening programme on the mortality rates for lung cancer. [175709]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 25 May 2004]:* The National Health Service Cancer Plan stated that the government would extend and roll out new screening programmes, where it is clear that screening reduces mortality. Currently, there is no such evidence for a screening tool for lung cancer. The United Kingdom National Screening Committee (NSC), which advises Ministers on all aspects of screening policy, considered data from an American study at its meeting in March 2003 and concluded that the findings reinforced the policy not to offer screening. At the July 2003 meeting of the NSC, it was noted that a major trial is currently under way in New York and the topic will be reviewed when that trial reports. The National Cancer Research Institute—established at our request in April 2001 to co-ordinate the national drive on cancer research—has now convened a strategic planning group on lung cancer, which is due to meet for the first time in the summer.

Mesothelioma

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients suffering with mesothelioma are taking part in the MSO1 drug trials; and what the first indications of the trial show. [174799]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 25 May 2004]:* The MSO1 trial is funded by Cancer Research UK and is being run by the Medical Research Council clinical trials unit. The trial will look at the value of chemotherapy and active symptom control (ASC) in the treatment of patients with mesothelioma as compared to ASC alone. So far, 280 patients have entered the trial from more than 30 centres in the United Kingdom and one in Australia, but recruitment will need to continue for a further two years before there are sufficient patients to make valid comparisons.

Workforce Development Confederation

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many staff are employed in the Workforce Development Confederation; and from where they were deployed into strategic health authorities. [173836]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is not available. Prior to the integration of workforce development confederations (WDCs) into strategic health authorities (SHAs), staff employed by WDCs had contracts of employment with SHAs from the date SHAs were established in April 2002. Prior to this, WDC staff had contracts of employment with their host national health service organisation, which were mainly health authorities and NHS trusts. These staff have been counted in the workforce census as SHA staff in the 2002 and 2003 censuses and prior to that were counted as part of the staff in their NHS host organisation.

Information on the number of staff employed by SHAs is shown in the following table.

Hospital, public health medicine and community health services (HCHS) staff and NHS hospital and community health services: medical and non-medical staff directly employed by strategic health authorities in England as at 30 September 2003

headcount

	Strategic health authorities	*All medical and dental and non-medical staff*
	England	3,540
Q01	Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	65
Q02	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	70
Q03	Essex	69
Q04	North West London	109
Q05	North Central London	131
Q06	North East London	163
Q07	South East London	104
Q08	South West London	91
Q09	Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	105
Q10	County Durham and Tees Valley	92
Q11	North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	67
Q12	West Yorkshire	82
Q13	Cumbria and Lancashire	55
Q14	Greater Manchester	169
Q15	Cheshire and Merseyside	208
Q16	Thames Valley	133
Q17	Hampshire and Isle of Wight	144
Q18	Kent and Medway	89
Q19	Surrey and Sussex	299
Q20	Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	66
Q21	South West Peninsula	114
Q22	Dorset and Somerset	103
Q23	South Yorkshire	402
Q24	Trent	139
Q25	Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	86
Q26	Shropshire and Staffordshire	93
Q27	Birmingham and The Black Country	189
Q28	Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire	103

Note:
Medical staff figures do not include staff employed by other organisations even when they work in the SHA.
Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census
Department of Health Medical and Dental Workforce Census

Orthopaedics

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many overseas orthopaedic surgeons are working in independent sector treatment centres; and of these, how many are registered with the Royal College specialist register. [174473]

Mr. Hutton: The specialist register is maintained and published by the General Medical Council (GMC). All doctors working unsupervised in independent sector treatment centres (IS-TCs) are required to be included in that register.

There are four overseas surgeons currently delivering orthopaedic surgical procedures within the IS-TCs programme. All four are included on surgical specialist registers maintained by the GMC.

Skin Cancer

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what research he plans to commission into the incidence of pre-cancerous skin lesions in England; [174122]

(2) what research his Department has funded into the incidence of skin cancers in England in the last five years. [174123]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department has not funded any specific research into the incidence of skin cancers in England in the last five years, and has no plans to commission specific research into the incidence of pre-cancerous skin lesions in England. Increased incidence in melanoma is due to greater overexposure to sunlight. Since 1997 the Department's policy research programme has spent £1.89 million on research relating to skin cancer, including projects on risk factors, health education and primary prevention.

Monday 7 June 2004

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Arts Council

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much has been spent by the Arts Council in each of the last five financial years, broken down by local authority. [176984]

Estelle Morris: The information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost

Arts Warehouse Fire

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the items of contemporary art *(a)* destroyed and *(b)* damaged by the fire at the arts storage warehouse in East London on 25 May; and if she will make a statement. [176713]

Estelle Morris: The contents of the warehouse are a matter for Momart Ltd. and its clients. No works of art from the Government Art Collection were stored in the warehouse at the time of the fire, nor were any works from the collections held by the national museums and galleries, or any works indemnified under the Government Indemnity Scheme.

Arts Council England is seeking to confirm the whereabouts of two works from the Saatchi Gift, a large body of work recently donated to the Arts Council Collection. It is also feared that the Crafts Council, which has received direct funding from the Arts Council since 1999, lost a number of pieces from its collection, and a full list will be published in due course.

Bullying

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the projects which have received Lottery funding to enable children to combat bullying. [176266]

Estelle Morris: Lottery distributors have awarded the following amounts on projects that have the explicit aim of combating bullying:

the Community Fund has allocated £5 million;

Arts Council England has allocated £10,211;

Awards for All has allocated £69,096;

New Opportunities Fund has allocated £1.7 million; and

the Heritage Lottery Fund allocated £2,700.

Please note that these figures refer only to projects that specifically aim to reduce bullying.

The list of projects is long and I am arranging for the detailed list to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Community Radio

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment her Department has made of the impact of community radio on small commercial radio stations. [176210]

Estelle Morris: This issue was considered in Anthony Everitt's independent evaluation of community radio, particularly in section 5.7 of "New Voices", copies of which are available from Ofcom. The report concluded that community radio stations should usually be able to receive up to half their income from advertising sales and sponsorship but that small commercial stations should be given some protection in certain circumstances. In addition, this Department is considering the representations made on this issue as part of the consultation on the draft Community Radio Order. We are also proposing to ask Ofcom to review the impact of the community radio sector two years after the first community radio licence is awarded.

We expect to lay the Community Radio Order in June.

Correspondence

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will obtain a reply to the letters dated 18 March and 22 April from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton to the Community Fund with regard to Highfield Country Park. [177431]

Estelle Morris: I understand that the Community Fund replied to the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton's letter of 18 March 2004 on 2 June. Unfortunately the Community Fund has not been able to trace his second letter of 22 April.

Creative Partnerships Programme

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the cost of the Creative Partnerships programme was in its first full year. [176459]

Estelle Morris: In 2002–03, £15 million was allocated to Creative Partnerships, of which £6.2 million had been spent by 31 March 2003, after two school terms of the programme. The amount spent during the third term will be included in Arts Council England's accounts for 2003–04. Figures for this year are not yet available.

Departmental Administration Budget

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate she has made of administration costs in her Department for *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06, broken down by (i) salary and (ii) other costs. [176456]

Mr. Caborn: The information requested on administration costs is contained in the table:

£ million

	2004–05	*2005–06*
Pay	19.5	19.5
Non-pay	28.5	31.5

Departmental Budget

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what proportion of her Department's annual budget is administered through non-departmental public bodies. [176421]

Mr. Caborn: The information requested is shown in the table:

	Percentage
2002-03	
Actual outturn	82.40
2003-04	
Expected outturn	82.40
2004-05	
Budget	83.43
2005-06	
Budget	84.03

Departmental Priorities

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what strategic issues have been given priority by her Department's Strategy, Policy and Delivery Division. [176458]

Mr. Caborn: The work of the Division reflects the strategic priorities of my Department as a whole. These are children and young people, community, the economy and modernising delivery.

Licensing Act

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether new licence fee revenues under the Licensing Act 2003 are intended to cover the cost of local authority implementation and enforcement. [177386]

Mr. Caborn: Fees under the Licensing Act 2003 will be set centrally at a level that allows the full recovery of the costs of administration, inspection and enforcement associated with the new system. We have agreed to an independent review of the fees and costs once the new system is in operation, and these will be kept under regular review.

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when her Department will advise local authorities of the commencement of the transitional period for implementing the Licensing Act 2003. [177387]

Mr. Caborn: The timetable for full implementation of the Licensing Act 2003 is dependent on Parliamentary approval of the draft Guidance to licensing authorities, which was laid before Parliament on 23 March 2004. Following parliamentary approval the Secretary of State can issue the Guidance to licensing authorities and name the first appointed day which will mark the start of the nine-month transitional period. The first appointed day will be at least six months after the Guidance is issued by the Secretary of State.

Museums

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate she has made of trends in the number of visitors to museums neither funded by her Department nor participating in the Renaissance in the Regions programme. [176455]

Estelle Morris: Estimates drawn from published data[1] suggest that, between 2000 and 2002[2], the mean number of visits to these museums (museums in England not directly funded by DCMS nor participating in Renaissance in the Regions) went up by 4 per cent.

[1] Visits to Visitor Attractions, published by VisitBritain.

[2] Latest figures available.

New Opportunities Fund

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money from the New Opportunities Fund was allocated to Bootle in each year since 1997. [176999]

Estelle Morris: The New Opportunities Fund began making grants in 1999. The awards to Bootle are shown in the table:

	Financial year amount (£)
1999-2000	4,416,628
2000-01	1,355,191
2001-02	327,965
2002-03	2,776,451
2003-04	993,693
2004-05	500

The information is freely available from the Department's searchable Lottery award database at www.lottery.culture.gsi.gov.uk, which uses information supplied by the Lottery distributors.

Olympics 2012

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what action the Government are taking to address the criticism in the International Olympic Committee's assessment of the UK rail network and the capital's transport infrastructure to improve London's chances of hosting the Games in 2012. [175559]

Tessa Jowell: Detailed transport plans are being developed for London's bid to host the Olympic Games in 2012, which will be submitted to the International Olympic Committee in November.

Over £17 billion of public money has been allocated to improve transport in London between now and 2012. This includes £1 billion which is being invested every year until 2010 in improving London Underground, which will deliver better services and greater capacity. By 2012, Stratford station, which is already the most accessible transport interchange in London, will be served by 10 railway lines, including the new high speed Channel Tunnel rail link into St Pancras.

Portable Electrical Equipment

Mr. Flight: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how often since 1997 *(a)* her Department and *(b)* its associated public sector organisations have undergone portable appliance testing of IT equipment; and what the cost was of portable appliance testing in each year since 1997. [176572]

Mr. Caborn: The Department does not hold detailed historical information for portable appliance testing and costs. The last test of portable items was conducted in 2002 but did not include computers replaced that year and those due for replacement in 2003.

This year the Department will be conducting tests on all portable electrical appliances. The contractor for this work will be chosen on a competitive basis. A budget sum of £4,500 has been allowed for testing of all equipment including computers.

Royal Parks Agency

The Royal Parks undertake portable appliance testing of electrical equipment, including IT equipment, annually at a cost of £1,500 per annum.

IT equipment comprises 62 per cent. of all electrical equipment, resulting in an annual spend of £930 on portable appliance testing of IT equipment. Since 1997 and including committed funds for 2004, this totals £7,440. In accordance with published guidance and best practice, The Royal Parks intend hereafter to portable appliance test IT equipment at two-year intervals only.

In respect of the Department's non-departmental public bodies, the information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Positive Activities for Young People Programme

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) which areas have been targeted for support under the Positive Activities for Young People programme; how these areas were decided upon; what targets have been set for the programme; and how success in those targets will be measured; [176457]

(2) what estimate she has made of the impact of the Positive Activities for Young People scheme on reducing crime and anti-social behaviour. [176460]

Mr. Caborn: Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP) is delivered in every Government office region in England. The target Local Education Authority areas within each region were selected using a weighting system encompassing crime levels, education goals on truancy and attendance and experience of previous activity schemes.

The PAYP target is to provide up to 22,500 full-time equivalent places (this could involve up to 67,000 young people) on diversionary activities for 'at risk' young people and to provide key worker support for up to 7,500 young people with a view to engaging them with positive outcomes within education and training and thereby reducing the likelihood of offending. Young people remain engaged in PAYP for as long as they need this type of support. The aim is to achieve a 65 per cent. positive outcome rate for PAYP participants, which is measured by entry into education, training and employment.

There is in place a three-year programme of evaluation that will look at the impact of PAYP over a period of time.

Public Libraries

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps her Department is taking to improve the availability in public libraries of reading material for those with reading disabilities. [176522]

Estelle Morris: It is for local authorities to make decisions about the reading stock provided in public libraries. We have funded the National Library for the Blind to provide seminars for library staff, and people with sight problems to promote a better understanding of services available and customer needs. With the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) we are bringing together a number of disability organisations and library agencies, to look at what practical improvements could be made. The People's Network of computers in all libraries, provided by early last year with 100 million from the National Lottery, enables texts to be printed in large formats. MLA is looking at how this and other services could be improved.

Regional Assemblies

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what research her Department has commissioned on the role which regional assemblies could play in service delivery in her Department's sectors. [176422]

Mr. Caborn: The existing regional chambers, or assemblies, do not have a service delivery function. Their principal responsibilities are the scrutiny of regional economic strategies under the Regional Development Agencies Act, 1998. In addition, from 1 April 2003 all the chambers took on the role of regional planning bodies, with responsibility for producing regional planning guidance. Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004, they will have responsibility for producing Regional Spatial Strategies. I have therefore commissioned no such research, but I do require the Regional Culture Consortiums for which I am responsible to develop regional cultural strategies in consultation with a wide range of regional partners including regional chambers and assemblies.

The Government's proposals for the powers and functions of elected regional assemblies, including their cultural responsibilities, were set out in the 2002 White Paper "Your Region, Your Choice: Revitalising the English Regions" (Cm5511). These will be reflected in the draft Bill that we intend to publish before the first referenda are held on whether to establish elected assemblies.

Television (Disabled Access)

Tom Levitt: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will take steps to encourage an increase in the proportion of television programmes subject to *(a)* subtitling, *(b)* signing and *(c)* audio description. [176388]

Estelle Morris: The Communications Act 2003 provided for substantially increased access provision by broadcasters, including, for the first time, cable and satellite broadcasters. It is the responsibility of Ofcom to

establish the code governing that increased provision. Following a recent consultation exercise, Ofcom expects to publish that code in the summer.

Within the context of planning for digital switchover, the Government have also had discussions with broadcasters to encourage them to increase the provision of audio description services across all digital platforms, including satellite and cable.

Tom Levitt: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to her answer of 24 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1313W, on Ofcom (Television Access), if she will take steps to ensure that Ofcom includes in the code the annual increases in subtitling, signing and audio description of television programmes promised during the passage of the Communications Act. [176389]

Estelle Morris: As we made clear during the passage of the Communications Act, we do not believe that it is necessary to specify in legislation annual targets for the increased provision of subtitling, signing and audio description. Ofcom has the power to establish interim targets, should they appear to Ofcom to be necessary to meet its duties in respect of people with disabilities. Those duties, combined with the extension of access obligations to cable and satellite channels and the 10 and five-year targets which are set out in the Act, represent a realistic way of achieving the substantial increase in access provision to which the Government are committed.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Bananas

Mr. Foulkes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what pressure the Department is exerting on discussions at the World Trade Organisation on bananas in order to protect Caribbean banana producers. [176078]

Mr. MacShane: As part of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) settlement with the USA and Ecuador reached in 2001, the EU is committed to the removal of quota restrictions on banana imports by the end of 2005. Further WTO negotiations will be needed to determine how the existing quotas are converted into tariffs.

The UK recognises the importance of the banana trade to African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) exporters. We firmly believe that the inevitable changes to the banana regime must be phased at a rate that allows their economies to adjust.

DEFRA and European Commission officials met earlier this year to discuss the matter. Further representations will be made as necessary, when the Commission seeks a mandate from member states for proposals on a tariff-only import regime to submit to the WTO.

As a separate issue, the existing waiver under WTO rules allowing the EU to provide tariff preferences for the ACP countries expires in 2007 and is to be replaced by the development of Economic Partnership Agreements. The terms for these are currently under negotiation. The UK is taking a close interest.

Bangladesh

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the level of protection afforded by the Government of Bangladesh to the Ahmadiyya Muslim community in Bangladesh. [176437]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Following reports of attacks against members of the Ahmadiyya community in Bangladesh last year, we made a number of representations to the Bangladeshi authorities asking them to ensure the Ahmadiyyas were given necessary protection and that the perpetrators of attacks are brought to justice. The Bangladeshi Government has accepted that there is a problem. However we remain concerned about the position of the Ahmadiyyas in Bangladesh. Our High Commissioner in Dhaka raised the issue during his introductory call on the Foreign Minister on 19 May. We will continue to monitor the situation closely and make representations when appropriate.

Bulgaria

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what support his Department has offered BAE Systems in their bid for the upgrading of helicopters in Bulgaria. [175803]

Mr. MacShane: The British embassy in Sofia has provided consistent support to BAE Systems in their bid, for example, by raising the matter in discussion with senior Bulgarian Ministry of Defence and military representatives and by meeting with company representatives.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions took place between his Department and representatives of the Government of Bulgaria with regard to BAE Systems' bid for the upgrading of helicopters in Bulgaria; which Ministers attended those discussions; on what dates they were held; and what the substance of those discussions was. [175804]

Mr. MacShane: There have been regular discussions over the last year between staff from the British embassy in Sofia and representatives of the Bulgarian Government and military. The dates of all such discussions have not been recorded but the substance covered the merits of the BAE Systems bid and of competing bids, and the procedures to be followed. Our ambassador raised this during his introductory call on senior military staff on 5 March, as well as at receptions and in the margins of other meetings. Our Defence Attaché, in addition to inquiring regularly about progress, attended a meeting on 27 April, between BAE Systems and Bulgarian Deputy Defence Ministers. This covered the bid process that the Bulgarian Ministry of Defence intended to follow.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations his Department has received from foreign Governments about the tender process for the upgrading of helicopters in Bulgaria. [175805]

Mr. MacShane: No formal representations from any foreign Governments have been made to the FCO regarding the tender process for the upgrading of helicopters in Bulgaria.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether Bulgarian officials have raised concerns with his Department about the bid by BAE Systems for the upgrading of helicopters in Bulgaria. [175806]

Mr. MacShane: Bulgarian officials have regularly discussed the bid with the staff of the British embassy in Sofia. Such discussions have covered, for example, the merits of the BAE bid and of competing bids, and the bid procedures.

Colombia

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions *(a)* he, *(b)* senior members of his Department, *(c)* the UK Government's representatives in Colombia, *(d)* the Government's representatives in New York and *(e)* his ministerial colleagues in London have (i) had, (ii) agreed to have and (iii) sought to have with (A) Jan Egeland, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Co-ordinator, (B) other officials of the Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs, (C) members and representatives of the Government of Colombia and (D) non-governmental organisations, in the UK and Colombia, following Jan Egeland's statement of 10 May 2004; and if he will make a statement. [173370]

Mr. Rammell: There are currently no legal restrictions in place in Colombia preventing access to any part of their country for international organisations and their agencies or for Colombian or foreign NGOs working there. However, the continuing armed conflict and the country's geography mean that access to the remotest parts of the country can be difficult. In addition, paramilitary or guerrilla groups do attempt to block access by outsiders to some parts of the country, particularly remote rural locations. International organisations and NGOs are also conscious of the potential risk to their staff of attempting to gain access to areas in which the armed conflict is on-going. Through its democratic security policy the Government of Colombia are trying to bring security and accessibility to all regions in the country. We constantly urge the Colombian Government to ensure that the implementation of this policy is in accordance with international law. We also monitor developments closely to inform our own travel advice.

Computer Misuse

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many cases of computer misuse there were in his Department in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003, broken down by category of misuse; and how many of those cases resulted in disciplinary action. [163290]

Mr. Rammell: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has monitored IT systems since April 2003. We take immediate, formal action against officers who seriously abuse the system (i.e. in cases involving pornographic images). In less serious cases (i.e. those involving offensive material), line managers normally warn first time offenders. We will take formal action against persistent offenders. Since April 2003, we have sent 72 formal warning letters. Disciplinary action has resulted in 34 cases.

We have taken disciplinary action on two occasions as a result of identifying e-mails containing offensive language.

We have also taken disciplinary action against two officers for browsing inappropriate websites.

Cyprus

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs under which UN Security Council resolution the Greek Cypriot Administration is classified as the Government of Cyprus. [176584]

Mr. MacShane: UN Security Council Resolution 541 (1983) called upon all States to "respect the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and non-alignment of the Republic of Cyprus", deplored the "declaration of the Turkish Cypriot authorities of the purported secession of part of the Republic of Cyprus" and considered the declaration as "legally invalid" and called for its "withdrawal".

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the effect on the international *(a)* trade, *(b)* communication and *(c)* sport restrictions on Northern Cyprus of the Turkish Cypriot vote to accept the Annan Plan. [176585]

Mr. MacShane: The clear majority vote by the Turkish Cypriot community at the referendum on 24 April to accept the UN Secretary General's plan for a settlement of the Cyprus problem has not gone unnoticed. The European Union and the wider international community have acknowledged that the situation on Cyprus has changed—there can be no return to the previous status quo. As a consequence of the Turkish Cypriot community's clear call for a settlement and for a future within the European Union the EU General Affairs and External Relations Council decided on 26 April 2004 to

> "put an end to the isolation of the Turkish Cypriot community and to facilitate the reunification of Cyprus by encouraging the economic development of the Turkish Cypriot community. The Council invited the Commission to bring forward comprehensive proposals to this end, with particular emphasis on the economic integration of the island and on improving contact between the two communities and with the EU."

As part of its preparation of these comprehensive proposals the European Commission, together with the UK and other international partners, is examining steps

to improve the situation of the Turkish Cypriots with regard to, inter alia, international trade, communication and sporting links.

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if the Government will permit direct flights between Northern Cyprus and United Kingdom airports following the Turkish Cypriot vote to accept the Annan Plan. [176586]

Mr. MacShane: The Government believe steps should be taken as quickly as possible to end the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots. On 26 April 2004, the General Affairs and External Relations Council invited the European Commission to

> "bring forward comprehensive proposals, with particular emphasis on the economic integration of the island [of Cyprus] and on improving contact between the two communities and with the EU".

We look forward to seeing these proposals. We are considering these issues too and see significant benefits in direct links between the northern part of Cyprus and other parts of the EU if this can be done in a safe and effective way, respecting the legitimate concerns and interests of all involved.

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if the Government will take steps within the European Union to promote the amendment of legislation restricting trade and communications with Northern Cyprus following the vote to accept the Annan Plan; and whether the Government plan to provide financial assistance to Northern Cyprus. [176587]

Mr. MacShane: Yes.

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the UK High Commission office in Northern Cyprus will be upgraded following the Turkish Cypriot vote to accept the Annan Plan. [176588]

Mr. MacShane: The British High Commission in Cyprus has maintained links with and a physical presence in both the north and south of Cyprus since 1974.

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has to invite representatives of the Turkish Cypriot administration to enter discussions with the Government on the future of Northern Cyprus. [176589]

Mr. MacShane: Our High Commissioner and his staff maintain a regular dialogue with the Turkish Cypriot administration on the future of Northern Cyprus. We are looking at the possibility of receiving Mr. Talat, as the elected leader of the Turkish Cypriot community, in London this summer.

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the status of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus London Representative Office will be changed following the vote to accept the Annan Plan. [176590]

Mr. MacShane: No.

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if the Government will take steps to promote the repeal of UN Security Council Resolution 541. [176591]

Mr. MacShane: No.

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if the Government would support an invitation from the UN Security Council and General Assembly for Turkish Cypriot elected leaders to address UN meetings; and if he will make a statement. [176592]

Mr. MacShane: We would have no objection to the elected leaders of the Turkish Cypriot community being invited to speak to the UN Security Council or the General Assembly in that capacity.

Departmental Administration Budget

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made towards the 5 per cent. reduction in real terms in his Department's administration budget by 2008 announced by the Chancellor in the House on 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 331. [176512]

Mr. Rammell: The real terms reduction of 5 per cent. or more will be a central feature of the public spending settlements for 2006–08 to be announced in detail later this year.

Departmental Secondments

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many staff in his Department and its agencies were seconded from the *(a)* private and *(b)* academic sector in each of the last three years. [174819]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The number of private sector secondees working in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and its agencies in each of the last three years was as follows:

	Number
2001–02	123
2002–03	87
2003–04	72

The majority of the secondees were brought in as business experts to work in UK Trade and Investment. They help UK companies develop their business overseas, and overseas companies invest in the UK.

The FCO has not seconded any staff from the academic sector in the last three years.

European Constitution

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the articles in the draft European Constitution where decision-making by qualified majority vote replaces unanimity in the existing treaties. [176568]

Mr. MacShane: The scope of qualified majority vote in the draft constitutional treaty is currently under negotiation. It was most recently discussed by Foreign

Ministers on 17/18 May in Brussels on the basis of the Irish presidency proposals set out in document CIG 75/04 (placed in the Library of the House on 24 May 2004 and available on the presidency website: www.eu2004.ie). As we made clear in our White Paper (Cm 5934) presented to the House on 9 September 2003, we will insist that unanimity remain for treaty change and other areas of vital national interest such as tax, social security, defence, key aspects of criminal procedural law and the system of own resources. Once a final text is agreed, the Government will publish a comprehensive comparison of the existing treaties and the new constitutional treaty.

Export Promotion

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will estimate the percentage of staff time devoted to promoting UK exports by *(a)* UK embassies in general and *(b)* the UK embassy in Saudi Arabia. [176413]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We estimate that around a quarter of staff time at British Missions overseas is devoted to trade development and investment work, which includes trade development activity. The estimated figure for Saudi Arabia is around 15 per cent.

Falkland Islands

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the amount of support from public funds to the Falkland Islanders in each of the last 10 years. [175206]

Mr. Rammell: The Falkland Islands are now economically self-sufficient in all areas, except defence. The economy of the Falkland Islands has grown rapidly since 1982 and the Falkland Islands Government continue to look to ensure that the economy remains diverse and sustainable for the future.

The Ministry of Defence retains responsibility for defence of the Falkland Islands while the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) offers some programme assistance towards small-scale projects. Examples of FCO funding towards such projects for the Financial Year 2003–04 were £64,800 towards good governance, £45,000 to assist with economic diversification projects and £48,000 towards environmental projects.

Given that many Government Departments have provided financial support to the Falkland Islands over the past 10 years, to provide the information requested would incur disproportionate costs.

Gibraltar

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he was able to resolve the issue of passenger cruise ships being barred from Spanish ports following visits to Gibraltar during his recent meeting with the Spanish Foreign Minister. [175565]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 25 May 2004]:* I told Senor Moratinos on 20 May that we regarded Spanish interference as unacceptable and illegal. I can report that since then there have been no incidents that have come to HMG's attention. I have written to him to underline the need to avoid any repetition of these actions. We continue to seek a permanent solution to this issue, and have asked the Commission to look into these incidents.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action the Government will take to secure compensation for the effects on Gibraltar of Spain's interference in free movement of cruise ships; and if he will make a statement. [175573]

Mr. MacShane *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave my hon. Friend the Member for Chorley (Mr. Hoyle) today (UIN 175584).

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 17 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 675W, on Gibraltar, if he will make a statement on the meeting held with Spanish officials regarding cruise liners being blocked from entering Spanish ports after calling at Gibraltar. [175583]

Mr. MacShane: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary gave to the right hon. Member for Devizes (Mr. Ancram) today (UIN 175565).

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 17 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 675W, on Gibraltar, whether compensation will be paid to shopkeepers in Gibraltar affected by cruise liners missing scheduled stops in Gibraltar. [175584]

Mr. MacShane: Our Permanent Representation to the EU has asked the Commission to look into this issue. Any decision to seek compensation would be a matter for the individuals concerned.

Gmice

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 25 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1574W, whether Gmice is a predominantly *(a)* Albanian and *(b)* Serb village; and when it was last visited by a United Kingdom representative. [176696]

Mr. MacShane: Gmice is a predominantly Albanian village. There is no record of it having been visited recently by a UK representative but there are plans for a visit in the near future.

International Criminal Court

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how the Government intend to vote on the UN Security Council resolution 1487, moved by the United States, relating to the renewal of the mandate of the International Criminal Court; and if he will make a statement. [176433]

Mr. Rammell: UN Security Council resolutions 1487 (2003) and 1422 (2002) provided a 12-month exemption from ICC investigation for UN peacekeepers who are citizens of states which are not parties to the ICC Statute. Both resolutions are consistent with the ICC Statute.

Although we understand US concerns about the ICC and their reasons for wanting the resolution rolled-over for a further 12 months, we do not share them. However, we recognise that those concerns are still firmly held by the US with possibly serious implications for UN Security Council-mandated operations. The Government attach the utmost importance to maintaining the effectiveness and efficiency of United Nations peacekeeping operations. They are therefore ready to support a roll-over of UNSCR 1487 while urging the US to recognise that a further resolution next year will not be necessary.

The UK is firmly committed to the ICC. We are one of the court's strongest supporters. We continue to work for an effective court and to encourage other states to become parties to it.

Investment Promotion Activities

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the investment promotion activities of United Kingdom officials in *(a)* Sudan and *(b)* Iraq. [175792]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: It is not UK Trade and Investment's role to promote investment in overseas countries. We are happy to support UK companies who have taken a commercial decision to invest overseas. As such, UK Trade and Investment offers general advice and information to UK companies wishing to trade with or invest in Sudan and Iraq.

A small commercial section operates from the British embassy in Khartoum, headed by the Deputy Head of Mission and supported by two local staff. The section works to identify opportunities for British goods and services in the Sudanese market and to provide sales leads to UK companies. The interest shown by UK companies in Sudan is low, due in part to the continuing uncertainty over the security situation in the country.

On Iraq, UK Trade and Investment has arranged a number of events in London and in the region, aimed at explaining the modalities of doing business in Iraq and bidding for reconstruction contracts. The commercial section of the British Office in Baghdad can provide information on request to UK companies.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs at what meetings between United Kingdom Government officials and United Kingdom companies in the last 12 months investment in *(a)* Sudan and *(b)* Zimbabwe was discussed; and what the (i) names of the officials concerned and (ii) nature of the discussions was in each case. [175831]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: UK Trade and Investment through its offices in the UK and overseas Posts in Khartoum and Harare provide general advice and information to companies wishing to establish or expand trade or investment links with Sudan and Zimbabwe. This is usually done on a responsive basis. We do not maintain details of all meetings at which such issues are discussed and to collate this information would incur disproportionate costs.

Iran

Mr. Chidgey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many Iranians of the Bahá'i faith have *(a)* applied for visas to visit the UK, *(b)* been granted visas to visit the UK and *(c)* applied for asylum on arrival in the UK following the granting of a visitors' visa in each year from 1998. [176621]

Mr. Mullin: Entry clearance applicants are not asked to record their religion as part of the application process. UK visas does not therefore hold figures for the number of Iranians of the Baha'i faith who have applied or been granted visas to visit the UK. Data on the specific religion of asylum seekers are not recorded and collated centrally, and could be obtained only at disproportionate costs.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to member states of the European Union in relation to the treatment by Iran of the Bahá'is and other religious minorities; and if he will make a statement. [176656]

Mr. Rammell: Ministers and officials regularly discuss the human rights situation in Iran with EU colleagues. EU partners share our serious concerns about restrictions on religious freedom and the persecution of religious minorities. The EU has raised these concerns with the Iranian authorities on many occasions, including through the EU/Iran human rights dialogue.

The situation of the Bahá'i community in Iran is of particular concern. The Bahá'is are not among the religious minorities recognised by Iran's constitution. The EU has made representations to the Iranian Government about the persecution of Bahá'is, most recently concerning the demolition of a Bahá'i shrine at Babol. The UK and most European countries co-sponsored a resolution on human rights in Iran at the United Nations General Assembly in December which expressed serious concern at the treatment of religious minorities, including the Bahá'is.

Iraq

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 17 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 748–49W, on Iraq, with whom the Coalition Provisional Authority liaised to ensure section 20 of memorandum No. 2 (CPA/ORD/30th May 2003/09) was met in all Iraqi prisons, including those under military control. [175771]

Mr. Rammell: The CPA liaised, and continues to liaise, with the Iraqi Corrections Service and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 17 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 748–49W, on Iraq, how often and by whom section 21 of the Coalition Provisional Authority memorandum No. 2 on management of detention and prison facilities (CPA/ORD/30th May 2003/09) has been exercised. [175775]

Mr. Rammell: Institutions have been inspected on a regular and on-going basis by senior officials of the Iraqi Corrections Service (ICS) and by experienced advisors working with the CPA's Senior Adviser for Prisons. However, the security situation in Iraq has limited inspections of ICS facilities, particularly outside the Baghdad region.

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on what will constitute the sovereignty to be transferred from the Coalition Provisional Authority to the Iraqi Governing Council on 30 June. [175776]

Mr. Rammell: The Iraqi Interim Government will be sovereign and will assume full authority for governing Iraq by 30 June.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the security situation in Iraq. [172296]

Mr. Mullin: The security situation is stable in much of Iraq; however, in parts of the south, supporters of Muqtada al Sadr have continued to clash with the Multinational Force. His illegal militia have been intimidating the local population of several cities, illegally occupying public buildings and attacking Iraqi civilians. Multinational Forces have sought to avoid a military escalation both in the south and in Fallujah, and we are hoping that current efforts by Iraqis to reach peaceful solutions will be successful.

We have also seen continued desperate terrorist attacks on leading members of the Iraqi Governing Council in an attempt to derail the political process. As the transitional period approaches we can expect more attacks by those who oppose a stable democratic Iraq. We continue to assist in building the capability of the Iraqi security forces to enable Iraqis to take full responsibility for law and order as early as possible.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what further assessment he has made since his memorandum of February 2004 to the Foreign Affairs Select Committee of whether detention and treatment of prisoners by the United States in Iraq is in line with their obligations under international law. [173863]

Mr. Rammell: The US authorities have made clear since their announcement in January of the investigation into allegations of maltreatment of detainees in Abu Ghraib, their determination to investigate such allegations and to punish those found guilty of wrongdoing. The US military is implementing an action plan to improve the treatment of detainees in Iraq. UK Ministers, the Prime Minister's Special Representative on Human Rights in Iraq the hon. Member for Cynon Valley (Ann Clwyd) and officials will continue to discuss with the US further measures which may need to be taken to bring all detention facilities in Iraq up to international standards.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether a decision has been taken to hand over *(a)* Saddam Hussein and *(b)* other prominent members of the former regime in Iraq to the jurisdiction of the forthcoming Iraq administration; and if he will make a statement. [174266]

Mr. Rammell: Detailed arrangements for the handling of transitional issues, including those raised by this question, are still under discussion. It would not be appropriate to comment further at this stage.

Sir John Stanley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on what date officials in his Department first became aware of allegations of abuse of Iraqi detainees by British Service personnel in Iraq; and from what source. [174393]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 19 May 2004]:* Officials first became aware of allegations of abuse of Iraqi detainees by British Service personnel in Iraq in April 2003. The allegations against Colonel Tim Collins, which were widely publicised in the media, were investigated and it was found there was no case to answer.

Sir John Stanley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on what date his Private Office received the telegram of 27 February from the office of the UK Special Representative in Iraq reporting on the meeting the previous day at which the International Committee of the Red Cross formally presented their report on the treatment of detainees in Iraq by the Coalition; on what date he himself was informed about the International Committee of the Red Cross report; and on what date he read it. [174594]

Mr. Rammell *[holding answer 20 May 2004]:* On the distribution of the telegram, I refer the right hon. Member to the answer my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary gave to the right hon. Member for Devizes (Mr. Ancram) on 26 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1637W. As the Foreign Secretary said in the House on 11 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 150, he was made aware of the ICRC report during the weekend of 8 and 9 May, and read it on 10 May.

Sir John Stanley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on what dates *(a)* officials and *(b)* Ministers in his Department first received copies of (i) the interim and (ii) the final International Committee of the Red Cross report on the treatment of detainees in Iraq by the Coalition. [174596]

Mr. Rammell *[holding answer 20 May 2004]:* The ICRC report of 10 February on "The Treatment by the Coalition Forces of Prisoners of War and Other Protected Persons by the Geneva Conventions in Iraq During Arrest, Internment and Interrogation" (which has been referred to as the interim report) was obtained by a Foreign and Commonwealth Office official on 19 March during a visit to Baghdad. It was not marked for Ministers' attention as MOD action was already in hand on the allegations concerning UK forces. Ministers received copies on 10 May after the report had been leaked to the media on 7 May. At the time the 10 February report was handed over, a further report for the UK Government was promised (which has been referred to as the final report). We expect to receive this some time after the ICRC visit this month to British detention facilities in Iraq.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what records the Government have of the number of Iraqis *(a)* killed and *(b)* detained in Iraqi jails since the occupation of Iraq. [174854]

Mr. Mullin: There is no reliable way of estimating civilian casualties in Iraq. For example, during an engagement, casualties are often taken away before UK forces can determine whether or not they have been fatally wounded. There may be other incidents not witnessed by, or reported to, UK forces. My right hon. Friend the Defence Secretary informed the House on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 21–24, that the MOD has begun a thorough trawl of unit records to establish the numbers of Iraqis killed in engagements with UK forces.

The following is the number of prisoners held in Iraqi jails in the UK sector of southern Iraq: Basra—487, Samawah—130, and Nasiriyah—175. We do not have statistics at present for the rest of Iraq although these are being collated by the US military.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many UK citizens are employed in Iraq in *(a)* civilian and *(b)* military posts that involve advising or assisting in the operation of prisons under the control of the occupation powers. [175962]

Mr. Mullin: Eight UK citizens are employed in Iraq advising and assisting in the operation of Prisons—three are civilians and five are military.

The UK is responsible for administration of prisons within Multi National Division (SE). All other Iraqi prisons are administered by US personnel. In Coalition Provisional Authority (South), the UK oversees and maintains prisons run by the Iraqi Prison Service through a Prisons Section which comprises three staff—two prisons advisors and an administrator. All these staff mentor Iraqi prison management and officers in the local correctional facilities. In addition, three Military Provost staff are currently assisting with the implementation of a prisons inspection regime in the Southern Region. Additionally, two Territorial Army Officers who are UK Prison Service officers are involved in Security Sector Reform in the prisons. All other staff working in the Correctional Service are Iraqi locals.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the US Administration about the recent air strike upon a small village on the Iraqi-Syrian border near Ramadi which resulted in the deaths of 40 people; and if he will make a statement. [176345]

Mr. Mullin: The office of the UK Special Representative for Iraq has liaised with the US authorities in Baghdad on this incident. We understand that a US military operation took place close to the Syrian border on 19 May based on intelligence and on a known route for smuggling in foreign fighters. Given the speculation that the attack resulted in civilian deaths the US Commander of the Multinational Force Iraq has ordered an investigation.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the UK Government was aware between 1985 and the start of the Gulf War in 1991 that Iraq had a biological weapons programme. [176562]

Mr. Mullin: No. The first definitive information on Iraq's biological weapons programme did not emerge until 1995 as a result of UN Special Commission inspections and the defection of Hussein Kamal.

Kashmir

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the relations between India and Pakistan, with particular reference to Kashmir. [175618]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: I welcome the recent public statements by the new Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh confirming their commitment to strengthen, widen and deepen India's bilateral relations, and to continue the peace process with Pakistan. The Pakistani government has also reaffirmed publicly their continued commitment to improving relations with India and the peace process. We hope the Indian and Pakistani governments will continue to build confidence through peaceful engagement including through early rescheduling of the postponed talks on nuclear Confidence Building Measures and the Muzaffarabad-Srinagar bus link. We hope that they will not be diverted by the terrorist acts of those seeking to undermine the process, such as the appalling attack on the Indian Border Security Forces that left 30 dead on 23 May. We hope that this process will, in time, lead to the resolution of all their outstanding differences, including over Kashmir.

Kongra-Gel

Mr. Caton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the evidential basis was for the decision to add Kongra-Gel to the EU list of terrorist organisations. [175946]

Mr. MacShane: The European Union decision to freeze the assets of Kadek and Kongra-Gel was based on agreement among member states that Kadek and Kongra-Gel met the criteria (contained in Common Position CFSP/931/2001). This decision was reached having reviewed evidence which demonstrated that there was sufficient continuity between the PKK, Kadek and Kongra-Gel to consider it to be the same organisation and that it remained involved in terrorism.

Leaflet Production (Costs)

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the *(a)* design costs, *(b)* production costs, *(c)* distribution costs and *(d)* total numbers produced of the leaflet, 'Cambridge and the European Union: what's in it for us?', and all similar publications. [175640]

Mr. MacShane: The leaflet 'Cambridge and the European Union: what's in it for us?' cost £195 to design and £542 for its print-run of 6,000. Similar leaflets were produced for Nottingham, Lincoln, Edinburgh,

Dundee and Liverpool. Total costs for all six leaflets were £1,370 for design and £2,833 for production. 6,000 copies of each were produced. Distribution costs in each case were under £50 per leaflet.

Overseas Employment

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many UK citizens he estimates are working overseas. [175820]

Mr. Mullin: We estimate there are some 15.5 million British nationals living abroad, but only a fraction of these have registered with British consulates.

Portable Electrical Equipment

Mr. Flight: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how often since 1997 *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its associated public sector organisations have undergone portable appliance testing of IT equipment; and what the cost of portable appliance testing was in each year since 1997. [176571]

Mr. Rammell: Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) in the UK is subcontracted to Mitie Maintenance Ltd. No separate record is kept of the testing of IT equipment.

Mitie have recorded that they last did a full PAT test on all equipment in the FCO Main Building (King Charles Street), and 1 Carlton Gardens in 2001; and in the Old Admiralty Building in 2002. Costs for this testing are not available.

A full PAT test on all equipment at the FCO site at Hanslope Park was conducted in 2003 and cost £38,000.

The British Council similarly does not keep a breakdown of PAT testing by particular types of equipment. However, testing has been undertaken on all equipment on an annual basis in British Council offices in London for the last three years. The costs for each full test were:

	£
2001–02	8,788
2002–03	9,053
2003–04	8,007

The last full portable appliance testing in British Council offices at Bridgewater House, Manchester was in 2002–03. The cost was £4,406.25.

The last full portable appliance testing in British Council offices in Edinburgh was in 2003–04. The cost was £709.99.

Details of portable appliance testing in other British Council offices in the UK are not collated centrally at present.

The BBC World Service test all IT equipment before use and replaces it on a three yearly cycle. The cost of testing per appliance is £7 per item, and the annual total cost of this testing is about £11,000.

Wilton Park tests all equipment annually. It does not record the cost of testing IT equipment separately. The cost in 2003–04 was £2,200.

Sudan

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with his colleagues in the European Union in the past month regarding military intervention in Darfur, Sudan. [176035]

Mr. Mullin: The situation in Darfur was discussed at the EU General Affairs and External Relations Council on 26 April and 17 May. It has also been discussed by the Political and Security Committee, the Africa Working Group and the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific Working Group.

The EU is seized of the need to respond to the humanitarian crisis, and is considering how it can provide political, technical and financial support to the African Union-led Cease-fire Commission in Darfur. There has been no discussion of military intervention.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Government of Sudan on the continuing detention of students, with specific reference to the Nyala area. [176117]

Mr. Mullin: We are very concerned about the reported arrests and harassment of students and others in Nyala, Darfur. Our embassy in Khartoum raised the continued detention of people in Darfur with the Head of the Sudanese Advisory Council for Human Rights on 26 May. We will continue to monitor the situation closely.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Government of Sudan on the sentences to death of *(a)* Ali Salih Ahmed and *(b)* Adam Abdel Rahman Ishag. [176118]

Mr. Mullin: On 26 May our embassy in Khartoum raised the cases of Ali Salih Ahmed and Adam Abdel Rahman Ishag, who were sentenced to death in Nyala, Darfur on 31 March, with the Head of the Sudanese Advisory Council for Human Rights. We will continue to follow their cases closely.

UK Personnel

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has received alleging that UK personnel are involved in providing training in interrogation techniques in Colombia, some of which may be inappropriate; and if he will make a statement. [173237]

Mr. Rammell: No direct representations have been received. We are aware of allegations made in a publication by the British NGO, Justice for Colombia, to this effect. There is no substance to the allegations.

Visas

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many spouses from *(a)* India, *(b)* Pakistan and *(c)* elsewhere were given entry clearance to come to the UK in the latest year for which figures are available, broken down by gender. [176281]

Mr. Mullin: The information requested is as follows.

Spouses granted entry clearance, FY 2003–04

Country	*Male*	*Female*
India	1,067	2,550
Pakistan	3,398	4,523
Elsewhere	6,925	14,643

The table gives the figures, broken down by gender, for the number of spouses granted entry clearance at our diplomatic posts overseas in India, Pakistan and all other visa issuing Posts during the financial year, 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004.

Zimbabwe

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the arrest of the Member of Parliament Roy Bennet following an incident in the Zimbabwean Parliament. [176062]

Mr. Mullin: Mr. Bennett was briefly detained on 18 May after an incident with ZANU (PF) Justice Minister Patrick Chinamasa in the Zimbabwean Parliament. The Minister had called Bennett's forefathers "thieves and murderers". Bennett had said that he was unable to forgive the Government of Zimbabwe for acquiring his farm despite six court orders prohibiting this. The incident is to be investigated by the Zimbabwe Parliament's privileges committee, including MPs from both parties.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he last discussed the threat to safety of members of the Movement for Democratic Change in Zimbabwe with the Secretary General of the Commonwealth. [176606]

Mr. Mullin: The Government of Zimbabwe withdrew from the Commonwealth on 7 December 2003. The Commonwealth Secretary General is not in a position to raise the treatment of political opponents with the Government of Zimbabwe. But Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials remain in close touch with the Commonwealth Secretariat on developments in Zimbabwe. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary continues to raise our concerns about political violence in Zimbabwe with ministers in Europe, the USA, Africa and elsewhere.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Alleged Offenders (Photographs)

Mr. Grieve: To ask the Solicitor-General whether the Law Officers have made representations to the Home Office on the police facilitating the publication of photographs of alleged offenders taken at the time of their arrest and before charge through inviting selected journalists to attend at the apprehension of the alleged offenders. [175514]

The Solicitor-General: The Law Officers have not made any representations to the Home Office on the police facilitating the publication of the photographs of alleged offenders taken at the time of their arrest and before charge through inviting selected journalists to attend at the apprehension of the alleged offenders.

Crown Prosecution Service

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Solicitor-General if she will make a statement on the effectiveness of Merseyside Crown Prosecution Service's Equality and Diversity Action Plan. [170341]

The Solicitor-General: CPS Merseyside's Equality and Diversity Action Plan aims to: increase the involvement of the Crown Prosecution Service in the local community; ensure decision making in all cases is fair regardless of background; assist staff in understanding and applying equality and diversity issues; provide opportunities to encourage people to join the Crown Prosecution Service and to provide full training for them.

The action plan is monitored and updated regularly by managers within CPS Merseyside.

CPS Merseyside has already made significant progress towards these goals. Staff regularly participate in a "Compact Scheme" in schools throughout Liverpool, and recently in Knowsley, in order to assist students to draft applications for employment and with mock interviews. This has proved particularly innovative and successful.

The population of black and minority ethnic and disabled staff within CPS Merseyside is still slightly below the level within Merseyside's working population and, in order to seek to address this issue, CPS Merseyside staff have recently participated in several initiatives to engage with local minority communities, including: "A Fair Play for Jobs" event in March 2004 held in Toxteth to target the black and minority ethnic communities; and, an "Action for Transition" event at Everton Football Club, to engage with disabled people.

The area has established a relationship with the Merseyside Racial Harassment Prevention Unit, which has close ties with the local BME communities. The area held a regional launch event for the CPS policy on racist and religious crime for criminal justice agencies and community groups.

At a recent ceremony at the Liverpool Town Hall to host the CPS National Equality and Diversity Awards, the Director of Public Prosecutions made two awards to staff from CPS Merseyside as representatives of inter-agency groups.

Operation Antler

Mr. Key: To ask the Solicitor-General if she will place in the Library the document sent by the Crown Prosecution Service to those questioned in connection with Operation Antler, explaining the Law Officers' decision on prosecutions. [146574]

The Solicitor-General: Operation Antler is the name given to an investigation into allegations made by ex-Servicemen who volunteered to participate in research experiments at Porton Down, Wiltshire police commenced the investigation in 1999, with the assistance of Ministry of Defence police officers.

The Crown Prosecution Service wrote to 66 volunteers on 7 July 2003 informing them that there was insufficient evidence to prosecute and that a further letter would follow given detailed reasons for the decision.

On 18 December 2003, the Crown Prosecution Service wrote to each of the 66 volunteers explaining the reason not to prosecute. Each volunteer received an individual letter discussing the evidence in their particular case and containing personal information such as that volunteer's medical history.

These letters are private correspondence between the Crown Prosecution Service and the volunteers and have not been placed in the Library. The Crown Prosecution Service has, however, produced an account of the evidence it has considered, the relevant law and its conclusions. A copy of this has been placed in the Library.

TRANSPORT

A249

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when work on the A249 Iwade to Queenborough improvement scheme set out in the Highways Agency Business Plan 2004–05 is expected to start. [176070]

Mr. Darling: My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Jamieson) attended the Start of Works Ceremony for the A249 Iwade Bypass to Queenborough Improvement Scheme on 29 April 2004 and performed the first stage of the excavation of the foundations for the first pier of the new Swale Bridge. The site is being prepared for the main construction works, which started on 1 June 2004.

A50

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations have been made to the Government Office of the East Midlands concerning the funding for completing the road linking the A50 at the A514 junction at Chellaston with Wilmore Road in Derby. [176749]

Mr. McNulty: None.

Bedford Park

Ann Keen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the implications are for the Bedford Park Conservation Area in Chiswick of the proposed Crossrail development. [176095]

Mr. McNulty: This is a matter for Cross London Rail Links Ltd. (CLRL), the developer of the proposed scheme. I understand that CLRL is currently developing an Environmental Impact Assessment for areas covered by its route proposals.

Crime (Public Transport)

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many crimes were committed on London Underground in each year since 1997; and how many were *(a)* assaults, *(b)* of a sexual nature and *(c)* robberies. [175461]

Mr. McNulty: The British Transport Police (BTP) have provided the following information on crimes recorded on London Underground in each year since 1998; information is not readily available for earlier than 1998.

	Assaults	*Sexual offences*	*Robberies*	*Passenger trips (million)*
1998–99	4,549	1,214	2,209	866
1999–2000	5,008	1,113	2,456	927
2000–01	4,813	1,040	2,700	970
2001–02	5,061	1,054	3,408	953
2002–03	6,317	1,032	2,304	942
2003–04	7,235	1,156	2,590	947

International Shipping and Ports Security Code

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he expects any flag carriers to be prevented from entering United Kingdom ports after the International Shipping and Ports Security Code comes into force. [176039]

Mr. Jamieson: The International Ship and Port Security (ISPS) Code requires ships engaged on international voyages to have a verified Ship Security Plan and an International Ship Security Certificate.

Ships that fail to provide evidence of an International Ship Security Certificate when seeking entry into a UK port will face control measures, which could include denial of entry.

The decision to refuse a ship entry into a United Kingdom port would not be based solely on the flag carrier.

Montague Report

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to publish the Montague Report; and what the reasons are for the delay in publication. [177218]

Mr. McNulty: Adrian Montague's detailed advice on the current Crossrail proposals raises complex issues and requires careful consideration against pressures on transport spending, especially on rail. My right hon. Friend will make a statement in due course.

Noise Pollution (Roads)

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been spent on sound-proofing to reduce noise pollution from roads in each of the last five years. [174465]

Mr. Jamieson: In the last five years the Highways Agency has spent around £429,000 on providing, or making grants for, sound-proofing of residential properties affected by highway works on the strategic road network. The breakdown of this expenditure by year is as follows.

	Expenditure (£)
1999–2000	0
2000–01	3,400
2001–02	205,987
2002–03	121,363
2003–04	98,230
Total	428,980

Oil Transfers (Lyme Bay)

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many oil transfers have taken place off the coast of South Devon in Lyme Bay in each of the last 10 years. [177202]

Mr. Jamieson: The number of ship-to-ship transfers of oil conducted in Lyme Bay in each of the last 10 years is tabled as follows:

	Number of transfers
1995	0
1996	0
1997	1
1998	0
1999	0
2000	1
2001	4
2002	1
2003	3
2004 to date	0

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the contingency plans drawn up by Devon, Torbay and Plymouth councils for coping with oil pollution spills; and whether those plans have been assessed in the light of projected levels of future oil transfers in Lyme Bay. [177203]

Mr. Jamieson: Every local authority contingency plan is risk assessed against pollution threats to the relevant local authority's area. All contingency plans are also assessed to ensure they are aligned with the UK's National Contingency Plan. The plans of the three councils in question have been exercised in the last 18 months and comply with UK policy.

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what *(a)* numerical and *(b)* percentage change in the number of oil transfers in Lyme Bay he has projected for the next 10 years; and if he will make a statement. [177204]

Mr. Jamieson: There is no projection of numbers of ship-to-ship oil transfers in Lyme Bay, as my Department is currently reviewing a number of draft proposals concerning the regulation of ship-to-ship transfer activities within UK territorial seas.

Ports Police

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which UK seaports have their own police forces. [177157]

Mr. Jamieson: There are seven ports in England and Wales that have their own police forces. They are:

Bristol,
Dover,
Felixstowe,
Falmouth,
Liverpool,
Tees and Hartlepool, and
Tilbury.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he will publish his conclusions on the arrangements for ports police in England and Wales. [177158]

Mr. Jamieson: A draft discussion paper on accountability and standards of the port police forces was circulated last year to the Association of Port Police Chief Officers' (APPCO) and the Home Office. Since then the Home Office have consulted on the role of small specialist police forces, including port police forces, in their consultation paper "Policing: Building Safer Communities Together". In addition the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) are now undertaking their own review of port policing. Our conclusions on the arrangements for ports police need to take account of the results of these two exercises, expected later this year.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport to whom ports police forces are accountable. [177159]

Mr. Jamieson: Port police forces are accountable to the relevant port authority by virtue of their establishment under Section 79 of the Harbours Docks and Piers Clauses Act 1847 or the incorporation of that provision into their own legislation.

Rail Service Franchises

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what costs have been incurred by the Strategic Rail Authority in respect of the tendering process for the *(a)* Scotrail and *(b)* Northern franchise; and what the anticipated final costs are in each case. [176271]

Mr. McNulty: To date, the Strategic Rail Authority has spent £2.8 million tendering the Scotrail franchise, and £2.6 million tendering the Northern franchise. The final cost is expected to be £3.9 million in both cases. The anticipated final costs include prudent provisions for evaluation and completion expenditure.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what costs were incurred by the Strategic Rail Authority in respect of the tendering process for the *(a)* Greater Anglia, *(b)* Wales and Borders and *(c)* TransPennine Express franchise. [176272]

Mr. McNulty: The full cost incurred by the Strategic Rail Authority in respect of the refranchising process for Greater Anglia was £4.0 million. For Wales and Borders the cost was £3.0 million, and for TransPennine Express £3.8 million.

Rural Transport Policy

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what mechanism the Government plan to use

to deliver rural transport policy *(a)* with reference to the future of the Countryside Agency and *(b)* following the ending of Rural Bus Challenge. [176913]

Mr. McNulty: To support the delivery of rural transport policy we are providing funding to local authorities to improve transport services in rural areas through the Rural Bus Subsidy Grant. Since 1998 the Rural Bus Challenge and Countryside Agency funding have been instrumental in pump priming rural transport projects.

Decisions on the future of the Rural Bus Challenge scheme will be announced following completion of the current review of bus subsidies and the Government's Spending Review. I understand that the future of Countryside Agency funding, which is the responsibility of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, is yet to be decided.

Other funding sources available to all transport authorities are capital resources made available through the Local Transport Plan system and revenue support for local transport schemes through the Revenue Support Grant System.

Secure Stations Scheme

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what criteria stations need to meet to be designated secure stations under the Secure Stations scheme; [176965]

(2) how much money has been spent advertising the Secure Stations scheme. [176967]

Mr. McNulty: The Secure Stations Scheme is designed to improve and standardise good security practices at overground and underground stations. The Scheme awards Secure Stations status to those stations that have worked with their local British Transport Police Crime Reduction Officer to reach specified standards in crime management, station design, station management, and passenger perceptions. Criteria covered include lighting, maintenance procedures, passenger information, incident reporting, and staff training.

The Department has spent approximately £15,000 on the printing and distribution of the Secure Stations Scheme guidance. The Scheme is also promoted through meetings, presentations, magazine articles, seminars and conferences with relevant interested parties. Accredited stations are also able to advertise the Scheme themselves through local news features and their own publicity materials (e.g. posters, company magazines).

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how many stations with Secure Station status have subsequently had the designation removed in each year since the scheme's inception; [176966]

(2) which stations have been designated secure stations under the Secure Stations Scheme. [177078]

Mr. McNulty: A total of 216 stations have been accredited under the Secure Stations Scheme. Of these, 86 are first time accreditations, 77 have been re-accredited and, as explained as follows, 53 have lapsed. A list of accredited stations has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Approximately two-thirds of all overground rail journeys and approximately one half of all London underground journeys involve passengers starting or finishing their journeys at a Secure Station.

Stations are awarded Secure Stations status for a two year period once they have met the required accreditation standards on station design, station management, crime management, and passenger perceptions. There is provision for the accreditation to be withdrawn if there is a clear breach of standards during that time. No stations have breached the standards during their accreditation period.

Accredited stations can apply for reaccreditation after their two-year award period has expired. Although a large number of stations have become reaccredited, 53 stations have not sought reaccreditation and, therefore, their accreditation status has been removed. There were two of these stations during 2000, three during 2001, 21 during 2002, and 27 during 2003.

Sustainable Transport Plan

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on progress being made on the implementation of a sustainable transport plan. [176541]

Mr. McNulty: Delivering Better Transport: Progress Report published in December 2002 set out the progress made in delivering the 10-year Plan for Transport in the first 18 months of its life. Some more recent information is also included in the Department's Annual Report, which was published in April 2004.

We are now reviewing the plan, taking account of events and achievements since its implementation. We will set out how the strategy will be rolled forward to 2015 and beyond after the conclusion of the Spending Review.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Jobseeker's Allowance

20. **Richard Ottaway:** How many people did not claim the income-based jobseeker's allowance to which they were entitled in 2003–04; and if he will make a statement. [177332]

Mr. Pond: In 2001–02, the latest year for which estimates are available, between 390,000 and 600,000 working-age adults were entitled to, but not in receipt of, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance.

These estimates are published in "Income Related Benefits Estimates of Take-Up in 2001/2002", copies of which are available in the Library.

Means-tested Benefits

21. **John Barrett:** What percentage of pensioners are in receipt of means-tested benefits. [177333]

Malcolm Wicks: The latest figures available which relate to the percentage of pensioners in receipt of income related allowances in Great Britain show that, as at May 2002, 27.4 per cent. of the population aged over 60 were in receipt of entitlements which included Income Support, Job Seeker's Allowance and Housing/ Council Tax Benefit.

Our approach is getting money to those who need it most. As at the end of May there were 2.5 million pensioner households in receipt of Pension Credit—over 3 million individuals.

As a result of measures that this Government have introduced, the poorest third of pensioners are now £1,750 a year—£33 a week—better off than they would have been under the 1997 arrangements.

Pensions

22. **Hugh Bayley:** What steps the Government is taking to retain final salary pension schemes for public sector employees. [177334]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government places great importance on the value of employer pension provision, but not on any specific type of provision, which must be suited to the specific needs of the employee and employer.

Where Government is the employer, it aims to provide a remuneration package that includes access to an occupational pension and employer financing towards the accruing costs of those pensions.

This generally involves providing defined benefit occupational schemes, but defined contribution arrangements may be provided alongside or instead where this is considered to represent value for money.

Where the Government is not the employer—in the wider public sector and indeed the private sector—our programme of informed choice measures seeks to raise awareness of the value of employer pension provision to ensure that employers take into account the recruitment and retention benefits which they can enjoy from providing and contributing to pensions.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of *(a)* public and *(b)* private sector employees are members of final salary pension schemes; and what the percentages were in 1997. [176987]

Malcolm Wicks: The information on employment shown in the table has been obtained from the Labour Force Survey (LFS), and refers to all people who are aged 16 or over and in employment. Figures have been rounded. The information on pension scheme members (also rounded) has been obtained from the Occupational Pension Schemes Survey (OPSS), Government Actuary's Department.

These are the two most appropriate sources, but unfortunately the GAD survey data is only available for 1995 and 2000 in recent years.

The information on scheme membership refers to Defined Benefit (DB) schemes, which may include salary related schemes that are not necessarily final salary schemes. Data for final salary schemes specifically is not available.

It should be noted that in calculating the percentage of employees who are members of DB pension schemes, two different data sources (LFS and OPSS) have been used. The percentages should, therefore, be treated as estimates only. For instance, one reason for caution is that the OPSS data is a snapshot of information relating to the year as a whole, while the LFS data presented here relates to the winter period (December to February) of each year.

	Private sector	*Public sector*	*All*
Employment (millions)			
Winter 1995	19.4	6.2	25.6
Winter 2000	20.9	6.3	27.2
DB scheme members (millions)			
1995	5.2	4.1	9.3
2000	4.6	4.5	9.1
Percentage of employed people who are members of DB schemes			
1995	27	66	36
2000	22	71	33

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the minimum amount awarded through the Pension Credit scheme is; whether small amounts are rolled up until reaching a certain value before being sent out; and if he will make a statement. [177025]

Malcolm Wicks: A pension credit award of less than 10 pence per week is not payable unless payment can be combined with another benefit. Pension credit is

normally paid weekly, but an award of less than £1 per week may be paid quarterly unless payment can be combined with another benefit.

Asbestos

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what powers are available to control asbestos and asbestos-containing products on or in domestic premises which may involve a risk to the general public; and if he will make a statement. [175370]

Mr. Andrew Smith: The supply and use of asbestos and asbestos containing products are banned under the Asbestos (Prohibitions) Regulations 1992, as amended in 1999.

The duty to manage asbestos, regulation 4 of the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002, applies to the common parts of domestic premises—areas used in common by the 'occupants of more than one private dwelling', as defined in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

Sure Start Maternity Grant

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many workers in Blackpool North and Fleetwood have received the Sure Start maternity grant. [175891]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested. The available information is in the tables.

Sure Start Maternity Grants for Blackpool Social Fund District by qualifying benefit

	Awards			
	Income support	*Jobseekers allowance (income based)*	*Tax credit*	*Total*
2000–01	625	75	327	1,027
2001–02	607	67	499	1,173
2002–03	690	62	639	1,391
2003[1]	50	6	53	109

[1] April.

Sure Start Maternity Grants for area covered by Lancashire West Jobcentre Plus District by qualifying benefit

	Awards			
	Income support	*Jobseekers allowance (income based)*	*Tax credit*	*Total*
2003[1]	1,640	229	1,841	3,710
2004[2]	142	17	135	294

[1] May to March.

[2] *April.*

Notes:

1. Blackpool North and Fleetwood Parliamentary Constituency used to be part of Blackpool Social Fund District. In May 2003, Blackpool Social Fund District was combined with Preston Social Fund District and parts of South West Lancashire and, Lancaster and South Cumbria Social Fund Districts to form Lancashire West Jobcentre Plus District. The two areas for which data is given above are therefore different, so the data is not comparable.

2. Prior to 2003–04, tax credits refer to Working Families' Tax Credit and Disabled Person's Tax Credit. From 2003–04, tax credits refer to Child Tax Credit payable at a rate higher than the family element and Working Tax Credit where the disability or severe disability element is included in the award.

3. Where a Sure Start Maternity Grant (SSMG) is awarded and the applicant or partner is in receipt of both IS and Child Tax Credit at the appropriate rate, the SSMG award is usually recorded under Income Support (IS). Similarly, where a SSMG is awarded and the applicant or partner is in receipt of both Jobseeker's Allowance (Income-Based) and Child Tax Credit at the appropriate rate, the SSMG award is usually recorded under JSA(IB).

4. Sure Start Maternity Grants were introduced on 27 March 2000. The very small number of cases for 1999–2000 have been excluded for data protection reasons.

Source:

DWP Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many mothers in Bootle have taken up the Sure Start maternity grant. [176237]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested. The available information is in the table.

Sure Start maternity grants for area covered by Knowsley and Sefton Jobcentre Plus District

	Applications	*Awards*
2000–01	2,076	1,867
2001–02	2,270	2,002
2002–03	2,714	2,254
2003–04	2,870	2,313
2004 April	201	154

Notes:

1. Bootle parliamentary constituency is part of Knowsley and Sefton Jobcentre Plus District, which was formed by merging Knowsley Social Fund District and Sefton Social Fund District in October 2003. For comparison purposes, data before the merger are given for Knowsley Social Fund District and Sefton Social Fund District combined.

2. Sure Start maternity grants were introduced on 27 March 2000. There were no cases for 1999–2000.

3. Data are given for all applications and awards, irrespective of whether the application was made by the mother or her partner.

Source:

DWP Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System.

Carers

Dr. Palmer: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will increase the amount which carers are allowed to earn without affecting their benefit. [177325]

Maria Eagle: We want to encourage carers to combine work and caring where possible. Carers are able to earn £79 a week, after allowable expenses. These expenses can include tax, national insurance contributions and half of the contributions to an occupational pension scheme.

as, in some cases, help with cost of substitute care. It is therefore possible for a carer to earn well in excess of £79 per week and be entitled to carer's allowance. The earnings limit moves each year in line with the lower earnings limit for national insurance purposes.

Child Support Agency

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what date has been set for all existing Child Support Agency assessments to be made using the new assessment criteria system. [176463]

Mr. Pond: I refer the hon. Member to the Written Answer I gave the hon. Member for Castle Point (Bob Spink) on 18 December 2003, *Official Report*, column 1092W.

Mr. Ian Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what plans he has to re-examine the use of statutory rates of interest for child support departures or variations where a parent has assets; [177406]

(2) what evidence he has collated to support his Department's assumption that the assets of non-resident parents have achieved the long-term sustainable interest rate of 8 per cent., net of tax, during the last five years. [177408]

Mr. Pond: We have no plans to re-examine the use of the statutory rate of interest in such cases. We are satisfied that the use of this rate provides a reasonable and simple basis for ensuring that children receive maintenance which reflects the financial standing of the non-resident parent.

Circus Performers (North-West)

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many vacancies he estimates there are in the North West for *(a)* tightrope walkers, *(b)* jugglers, *(c)* stilts performers, *(d)* unicyclists and *(e)* other circus performers; and if he will make a statement. [177131]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is not available by specific occupational type or area. However, a search of the Labour Market System on 27 May 2004 revealed that there were four vacancies nationwide for people with circus skills. Of these one, for a circus skills assistant, was in the Manchester area.

Jobcentre Plus provides high quality services to employers, helping them to fill job vacancies quickly and effectively with well-prepared and motivated employees. Jobcentre Plus handles over 10,000 job vacancies every working day and takes vacancies from all employers as long as the work complies with current legislation.

Correspondence

David Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when a letter will be sent to the hon. Member for Walsall, North in reply to his letter of 28 April, addressed to the Chief Executive, The Pension Service, regarding a constituent, ref. RFE/BRLPR/2747BWY. [176465]

Malcolm Wicks: The hon. Member's letter dated 28 April 2004 addressed to the Chief Executive of the Pension Service was received on 30 April. The Pension Service wrote to the hon. Member on 6 May advising that they had arranged for the correspondence to be forwarded to the Group Finance Director.

The Group Finance Director endeavours to reply to correspondence within 20 working days of receiving that correspondence. A reply was issued on 27 May 2004.

Council Tax Benefit

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much money was claimed in council tax benefit in each year since 1997, broken down by region. [176736]

Mr. Pond: The information is in the table.

Council tax benefit expenditure

£ million

Government office region	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
North East	139.1	144.1	151.7	155.5	160.7	170.9
North West	367.1	373.9	380.8	383.0	394.0	402.8
Yorkshire and the Humber	204.9	213.2	217.3	221.6	231.9	242.1
East Midlands	139.0	146.7	154.2	159.7	164.9	183.0
West Midlands	229.5	233.0	243.8	252.5	267.1	282.0
East of England	161.1	167.5	176.1	182.1	191.4	209.0
London	399.3	383.6	380.1	389.3	414.9	436.1
South East	216.0	221.1	230.0	234.6	246.7	267.7
South West	157.6	163.5	169.1	172.7	178.6	192.2
Wales	94.1	103.3	108.2	119.0	123.7	130.8
Scotland	287.0	302.7	306.6	310.0	315.6	321.5
Total	2,394.7	2,452.6	2,517.8	2,579.9	2,689.3	2,838.1

Notes:

1. All expenditure figures are rounded to the nearest £0.1 million.

2. Expenditure figures for 1997/98 to 2001/02 are final outturn figures supplied by local authorities in 'final audited' subsidy claims. The figures for 2002–03 are the latest available estimated outturn figures, provided by local authorities in their 'initial final' subsidy claims, and are subject to revision in the 'final audited' claims.

3. Figures are total yearly amounts paid to beneficiaries, regardless of the source of funding. They include payments subsidised by DWP, those funded through local authorities Housing Revenue Accounts, spending financed by the National Asylum Support Service and benefit spending financed from local authorities' general funds.

Income Support

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many income support claimants there were in each Jobcentre Plus district in England in the latest month for which figures are available; and what funds are available in each district for *(a)* community care grants, *(b)* budgeting loans and *(c)* crisis loans. [176265]

Mr. Pond: There are no separate budgets for budgeting loans and crisis loans, but a combined gross loans budget for both. The 2004–05 district budgets for community care grants and for gross loans (organised by Government Office Region) are available in the Library.

The income support information is in the table.

Income support claimants in England by Jobcentre Plus district—November 2003

Jobcentre Plus District	*Income Support Claimants*
England	1,829,800
Barnsley and Rotherham	21,400
Bedfordshire	16,400
Berkshire	17,100
Birmingham and Solihull	64,100
Bolton and Bury	19,200
Bradford	23,500
Bucks and Oxfordshire	26,000
Calderdale and Kirklees	22,500
Cambridgeshire	17,600
Cheshire	22,600
City of Sunderland	15,300
Cornwall	15,100
County Durham	23,200
Coventry and Warwickshire	25,300
Cumbria	14,900
Derbyshire	32,100
Devonshire	33,800
Doncaster	13,000
Dorset	17,900
Dudley and Sandwell	24,700
Essex	47,400
Gateshead and South Tyneside	19,000
Gloucestershire	13,400
Greater Nottingham	25,700
Hampshire	43,900
Herefordshire and Worcestershire	16,500
Hertfordshire	23,800
Hull and East Riding	23,800
Kent	49,000
Knowsley and Sefton	26,700
Lancashire East	25,000
Lancashire West	32,900
Leeds	26,400
Leicestershire	26,200
Lincolnshire	18,400
Liverpool	42,000
London Central North East	54,100
London Central North West	45,700
London Central South	47,800
London East	38,500
London North	43,400
London North West	30,100
London South	38,100
London South East	34,700
London West	33,000
Manchester	38,500
Newcastle and North Tyneside	24,600
Norfolk	22,600
North Nottinghamshire	15,600
North Yorkshire	15,900
Northamptonshire	16,200
Northumberland	10,200
Oldham and Rochdale	21,500
Salford and Trafford	20,700
Sheffield	22,800
Shropshire	11,900
Somerset	12,700
South Humberside	11,000
St. Helens and Halton	16,600
Staffordshire	34,100
Stockport and Tameside	18,100
Suffolk	16,800
Surrey	17,700
Sussex	42,300
Tees Valley	34,300
Wakefield	13,100
West of England	34,300
Wigan	11,600
Wiltshire	13,200
Wirral	17,700
Wolverhampton and Walsall	23,700

Notes:
1. Figures have been rounded to the nearest hundred.
2. Figures are based on a 5 per cent. sample and therefore subject to sampling variation.
3. November 2003 figures exclude income support MIG claimants who transferred to pension credit with effect from October 2003.
4. November 2003 figures are slightly higher than the publication due to the addition of clerical cases which were not available at the time of publication.
5. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
6. Jobcentre Plus is reorganising from 90 districts in Great Britain to 74 between April 2004 and April 2006. Since the figures in the table are at November 2003, the districts shown are prior to reorganisation, when there were 71 Jobcentre Plus districts in England.

Source:
DWP Information Centre, 5 per cent. sample

Mr. Graham Cotton

Mr. John Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether Mr. Graham Cotton of Olton in Solihull, a Qa pensioner, would be eligible for compensation under the provisions of the Pensions Bill. [176233]

Malcolm Wicks: It is not yet possible to say exactly who will be eligible for help through the proposed financial assistance scheme provision of the Pensions Bill. This is a difficult and complex area and, as explained at Report stage of the Bill on 19 May, we shall be working on the detail over the coming months, in consultation with interested parties, to ensure that the scheme is workable and provides appropriate levels of assistance to the right people. Eligibility of individuals will depend on the detailed design of the scheme and the circumstances of particular schemes and scheme members.

Pension Protection Fund

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what contribution the Government will make to the Pension Protection Fund in lieu of any contribution under the current guaranteed minimum pension arrangements. [175901]

Malcolm Wicks: When an eligible scheme enters the PPF, and it is a contracted-out occupational pension scheme, the PPF will not take on specific responsibility for paying the guaranteed minimum pension. This is to simplify the PPF rules in relation to entitlement to compensation.

However, the level of compensation payable will be significant, and reflect the individual scheme rules. PPF will pay 100 per cent. level of compensation to members who are over their pension scheme's normal pension age (NPA) and 90 per cent. level to members below their pension scheme's NPA, subject to a benefit cap.

The basic benefits for members below NPA will reflect the following:

NPA;

accrual rate;

pensionable salary; and

pensionable service

Pension Schemes

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what inquiries he has made about the wind-up of the Warwick and Debenholt pension schemes since 19 April 2002; and if he will make a statement. [176532]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government are aware of these three pension schemes. The Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority investigated these schemes and published a report with their findings. Opra found that there were breaches of the Pensions Act 1995. The two trustees of the schemes were disqualified from acting as trustees of any occupational pension scheme and were fined.

One of the schemes has been wound up and Opra has continued to monitor the other two schemes as they are being wound up by the independent trustee. There have also been complaints made to the Pensions Ombudsman regarding these two schemes, which the Ombudsman is considering.

The Government are sympathetic to all members of final salary occupational pension schemes that will not receive the pensions they worked to build up for their future retirement.

It is because of these situations that the Government are introducing, from April 2005, the Pension Protection Fund which will mean that members of final salary schemes based in the UK can rest assured that they will always receive a meaningful pension in future, even if their employer goes bust and leaves the pension scheme underfunded.

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what inquiries he has made about the wind-up of the Cheney pension schemes since 19 April 2002; and if he will make a statement. [176533]

Malcolm Wicks: We continue to take an interest in the Cheney pension scheme. However, as this case is still subject to ongoing legal proceedings, we are unable to comment further at this time.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the pension schemes which have come forward so far to claim compensation under the proposed fund to compensate people who have lost their pensions through pension wind-ups. [175900]

Malcolm Wicks: No schemes or members have been invited to claim assistance from the financial assistance scheme proposed in the Pensions Bill. As explained at Report stage of the Bill on 19 May, we are currently working on the detail of the scheme.

In the meantime, we have been collecting data on schemes that are winding up, or that have wound up, to establish firm estimates of the numbers affected and the extent of the problem. We shall lay a report on the results of this exercise by the end of June. As this exercise was conducted in confidence, the data published will be collated and not identified with any individual scheme.

Post Office Card Account

Miss Begg: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to make it easier for benefit claimants to open a Post Office card account. [177331]

Mr. Pond: The process for opening a Post Office card account is already a straightforward one and over 3 million customers have so far said they want to open one.

We have already made some improvements to the Post Office card account process where real problems have been identified and continue to closely monitor its operation. We want to make further changes which would include less form-filling and a straightforward process for customers getting account details back to DWP via their postmaster.

RNIB (Tactile Markings)

Mr. Berry: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what progress has been made, following representations by the Royal National Institute for the Blind, regarding the provision of tactile markings that will be issued as part of the Department's exception scheme to facilitate blind and partially sighted people's identification of them amongst other postal items they might receive. [177311]

Mr. Pond: Many blind and partially sighted people have no problems using cash machines or the PIN pads at Post Offices.

We will use cheque payments for those who we are unable to pay into any sort of account.

We want to ensure that cheque payments meet the needs of blind and partially sighted people in these circumstances and I have met the RNIB on a number of occasions to discuss this.

We carefully considered the RNIB's suggestion to include tactile markings on cheques. But such markings would make cheques more easily identifiable and, therefore, more susceptible to theft before they reach the customer. Cheques with such markings would take longer to process through the banks' clearing system.

However, we are continuing to work closely with RNIB. And if security and other technological improvements make this a viable option in the future then we will, of course, look again at the provision of tactile markings on payment cheques.

Sure Start

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when Sure Start maternity grant leaflets were distributed to Job Centre Plus local offices; and what steps he has taken to ensure that *(a)* all Job Centre Plus local offices were supplied with leaflets from the start of the scheme and *(b)* staff were fully briefed about it. [176771]

Mr. Pond: The "Good News for Babies" leaflet was produced in March 2000 when the Sure Start Maternity Grant (SSMG) replaced the Maternity Payment. Over 440,000 leaflets were distributed to local offices using the Department's internal distribution network. The leaflet was also available on the DSS/DWP website. In addition a number of other departmental leaflets were revised to include information on SSMGs and were available to local offices from April 2000.

Staff dealing with the Social Fund and those with customer contact were briefed in advance of the proposed SSMG scheme in November 1999. A detailed procedural bulletin, covering initial training and guidance, was issued on 16 February 2000. The Social Fund new entrant training was also amended to include SSMG procedures by April 2000.

Unemployment Benefits

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much was spent by Government in real terms on unemployment benefits in each of the last 25 years. [175028]

Mr. Pond: The information requested is in the tables.

£ million real terms 2004–05 prices

	Unemployment benefit	*Supplementary benefit/ income support paid to the unemployed*	*Jobseeker's allowance (contribution based)*	*Jobseeker's allowance (income based)*	*Total*
1979–80	2,091	1,675	—	—	3,766
1980–81	3,469	2,152	—	—	5,621
1981–82	4,211	3,741	—	—	7,953
1982–83	3,467	5,932	—	—	9,399
1983–84	3,308	7,195	—	—	10,503
1984–85	3,314	7,832	—	—	11,146
1985–86	3,166	8,396	—	—	11,562
1986–87	3,348	8,372	—	—	11,720
1987–88	2,684	7,286	—	—	9,971
1988–89	1,892	5,205	—	—	7,097
1989–90	1,171	4,201	—	—	5,372
1990–91	1,287	4,352	—	—	5,639
1991–92	2,238	5,861	—	—	8,099
1992–93	2,378	7,268	—	—	9,646
1993–94	2,172	7,546	—	—	9,718
1994–95	1,684	6,718	—	—	8,402
1995–96	1,388	6,074	—	—	7,462
1996–97	715	2,872	405	2,232	6,223
1997–98	—	—	564	4,059	4,623
1998–99	—	—	547	3,558	4,106
1999–2000	—	—	518	3,157	3,675
2000–01	—	—	498	2,714	3,213
2001–02	—	—	510	2,320	2,830
2002–03	—	—	545	2,214	2,760
2003–04[1]	—	—	543	2,074	2,617

[1] 2004 figures are in 2004–05 prices.

Notes:

1. Supplementary benefit for the unemployed was replaced by income support for the unemployed in April 1988.
2. Unemployment benefit and income support for the unemployed were replaced by jobseeker's allowance contribution based and jobseeker's allowance income based in October 1996.
3. Totals may not sum due to rounding to nearest million.
4. Figures for 2003–04 are estimated outturn.

Note:

The GDP deflator used to convert figures to real terms was published at Budget.

Winter Fuel Allowance

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have received winter fuel payments in *(a)* Greater London and *(b)* each London borough in each of the last three years; and what the value of such payment was in each case. [177060]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is in the table.

	Total number of payments made 2001-02	*Total value of payments made 2001-02 (£)*	*Total number of payments made 2002-03*	*Total value of payments made 2002-03 (£)*	*Total number of payments made 2003-04*	*Total value of payments made 2003-04 (£)*
Greater London boroughs	1,080,395	170,852,000	1,082,400	171,508,800	1,071,295	190,250,250
Inner London—West	124,715	21,023,800	124,865	21,126,400	123,170	23,341,150
Camden	25,835	4,368,700	25,815	4,391,600	25,470	4,864,300
City of London	1,035	173,300	1,060	179,000	1,055	200,300
Hammersmith and Fulham	19,765	3,336,400	19,785	3,356,100	19,470	3,677,850
Kensington and Chelsea	18,385	3,125,000	18,740	3,202,100	18,670	3,565,600
Wandsworth	33,805	5,568,700	33,525	5,535,900	32,950	6,106,700
Westminster	25,890	4,451,700	25,940	4,461,700	25,560	4,926,400
Inner London—East	215,230	36,173,500	214,035	36,077,500	210,295	39,181,800
Hackney	22,055	3,832,600	21,985	3,827,800	21,505	4,139,300
Haringey	26,820	4,469,800	26,965	4,489,800	26,670	4,868,550
Islington	22,435	3,821,300	22,335	3,815,800	22,090	4,159,600
Lambeth	30,145	5,061,100	29,990	5,058,500	29,575	5,494,950
Lewisham	34,225	5,512,000	34,235	5,542,800	33,720	6,083,300
Newham	27,320	4,601,900	26,955	4,549,100	26,460	4,929,750
Southwark	29,570	4,945,700	29,295	4,914,600	28,650	5,348,800
Tower Hamlets	22,665	3,929,100	22,275	3,879,100	21,625	4,157,550
Outer London—East and North East	271,755	41,566,700	271,850	41,651,200	269,280	46,476,450
Barking and Dagenham	27,895	4,353,900	27,495	4,300,800	26,685	4,748,500
Bexley	43,185	6,397,800	43,565	6,462,600	43,560	7,257,900
Enfield	46,030	7,101,100	46,205	7,147,500	45,810	7,952,100
Greenwich	33,235	5,251,400	33,015	5,227,400	32,475	5,831,500
Havering	48,705	7,123,000	48,990	7,161,900	49,070	8,043,250
Redbridge	40,285	6,151,000	40,290	6,179,900	39,905	6,924,350
Waltham Forest	32,415	5,188,500	32,285	5,171,100	31,770	5,718,850
Outer London—South	198,030	30,024,300	199,130	30,249,000	197,990	33,973,000
Bromley	60,840	9,014,900	61,515	9,135,000	61,385	10,319,950
Croydon	52,710	8,087,300	52,990	8,143,800	52,860	9,081,600
Kingston upon Thames	23,830	3,630,900	23,910	3,644,200	23,650	4,118,500
Merton	28,405	4,402,300	28,395	4,418,500	27,945	4,922,950
Sutton	32,245	4,888,900	32,320	4,907,500	32,145	5,530,000
Outer London—West and North West	270,665	42,063,700	272,520	42,404,700	270,565	47,277,850
Barnet	52,855	8,092,200	53,315	8,161,800	52,875	9,240,050
Brent	36,155	5,819,800	36,670	5,903,700	36,540	6,457,700
Ealing	42,475	6,756,300	42,710	6,796,200	42,350	7,509,800
Harrow	36,930	5,627,800	37,250	5,691,800	37,215	6,399,350
Hillingdon	41,930	6,316,800	42,055	6,350,800	41,710	7,091,050
Hounslow	31,320	4,941,700	31,455	4,968,000	31,090	5,470,250
Richmond upon Thames	29,000	4,509,100	29,065	4,532,400	28,780	5,109,650

Notes:
1. Numbers rounded to the nearest five.
2. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
3. Figures for 2003-04 are the latest available.
4. Local authorities are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant postcode directory.

Source:
IAD Information Centre, 100 per cent. sample

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cut-off date is for eligibility for the winter heating allowance; and whether he has any plans to change the eligibility criteria. [177563]

Malcolm Wicks: The cut off date for eligibility for the winter fuel payment is the last day of the third week in September each year, for the 2004-05 winter it is 26 September 2004. There are no current plans to change the eligibility criteria for winter fuel payments.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Afghanistan

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the irrigation projects in Afghanistan that receive financial assistance from his Department. [176594]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID does not support any irrigation projects in Afghanistan. DFID's support in Afghanistan is focused on public administration reform

and economic management; livelihoods development; security sector reform; and humanitarian support. This is in line with the Afghan Government's request that each donor focus their support on areas where they have a comparative advantage.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what estimate he has made of the number of deaths in Herat, Afghanistan since 1 January. [176596]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Factional fighting broke out in Herat following the assassination of Aviation Minister Mirwais Sadiq in March. Initial reports suggested the death toll to be near to 100 though further investigation revealed the figures to be closer to 10. There is limited capacity for monitoring and data collection in Afghanistan, and the number of deaths from other causes since 1 January is unclear.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) how much money has been *(a)* allocated for and *(b)* spent by his Department on development aid to Afghanistan in each of the last three years; [176597]

(2) how much money from his Department has been *(a)* allocated for and *(b)* spent on humanitarian aid to Afghanistan in each of the last three years. [176595]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: In immediate response to the humanitarian need in financial year 2001–02 DFID spent £46.4 million on humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan.

At the Tokyo conference in January 2002 DFID pledged £200 million over 5 years from 2002–03. Since then DFID have allocated £75 million per year for Afghanistan and disbursed £75.8 million in 2002–03 and £77.6 million in 2003–04. The breakdown between humanitarian and reconstruction assistance is shown as follows.

£ million

Financial year	*Humanitarian assistance*	*Reconstruction assistance*
2002–03	44.7	31.1
2003–04	8.1	69.5

At the Berlin conference on Afghanistan in April this year, the UK Government increased its Tokyo pledge to at least £500 million.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development in how many areas of Afghanistan the National Solidarity Programme is distributing aid. [176599]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The National Solidarity Programme is distributing aid in 96 districts (three in each of the 32 provinces).

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what estimate he has made of the level of voter registration in Afghanistan. [176601]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: According to the latest UN figures from May 29, 2.9 million voters have registered so far from an estimated 10.4 million electorate.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the UK-based non-governmental organisations working in Afghanistan. [176603]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: There are 33 UK-based non-governmental organisations currently working in Afghanistan. They are:

Actionaid
Afghanaid
Aid International/Mercy Corps
British Red Cross
CAFOD
CARE International
Children in Crisis
Christian Aid
Concern Worldwide
Cord
Focus Humanitarian (Europe)
GOAL
Hope Worldwide
Islamic Relief
Learning for Life
Marie Stopes International
Medecins sans Frontieres
Ockenden International
Oxfam
Save the Children UK
Tearfund
Trocaire
War Child
World Vision
Halo Trust
(HMD) Response International
IPPF
Jacob's Well Appeal
Medair UK,
Medecins du Monde
Muslim Hands
Merlin
Womankind Worldwide.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many aid projects funded by his Department have been discontinued in Afghanistan. [176604]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID has not discontinued any projects in Afghanistan.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what written representations from aid donors he has received on humanitarian conditions in Afghanistan; and if he will publish those representations. [176610]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID is provided with monthly updates on the humanitarian situation by the British Agencies Afghanistan Group. DFID also receive regular updates and requests for support from the various branches of the United Nations. DFID are presently considering the annual appeal for 2004 from the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. All of these documents are publicly available.

Bananas

Mr. Foulkes: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what pressure the Department has put on negotiations to seek a positive outcome for Caribbean banana producers in the World Trade Organisation discussions on bananas. [176079]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: As part of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) settlement with the USA and Ecuador reached in 2001, the EU is committed to the removal of quota restrictions on banana imports by the end of 2005. Further WTO negotiations will be needed to determine how the existing quotas are converted into tariffs.

The UK recognises the importance of the banana trade to African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) exporters. DFID firmly believes that the inevitable changes to the banana regime must be phased at a rate that allows their economies to adjust.

Defra and European Commission officials met earlier this year to discuss the matter. Further representations will be made as necessary, when the Commission seeks a mandate from member states for proposals on a tariff-only import regime to submit to the WTO.

As a separate issue, the existing waiver under WTO rules allowing the EU to provide tariff preferences for the ACP countries expires in 2007 and is to be replaced by the development of Economic Partnership Agreements. The terms for these are currently under negotiation. The UK is taking a close interest.

Children and Young People Unit

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what progress his Department is making in producing an action plan for children and young people in association with the Children and Young People Unit. [175983]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID has been working with the Children, Young People's and Families Directorate of the DFES for the past year, examining how to enable children and young people to participate in our work. The DFID Action Plan on Children and Young People's Participation will be published in June. DFID has been consulting children and young people about our work for a number of years and there are many examples of this work outlined in the Action Plan.

China

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the loss of farming land in China over the last 10 years. [177410]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The majority of the 140 million remaining rural poor in China live in environmentally fragile and remote areas and are heavily dependent on agriculture and related activities for their livelihoods. The Department for International Development (DFID) has, and is working to develop, a number of activities in China which seek to address aspects of rural poverty, including those related to agriculture.

Official statistics from the Ministry of Land and Resources in China indicate that current available arable land area is 123 million ha, or 12.8 per cent. of the total. The area of land for grain production is reported to have declined from 98 to 76 million ha from 1998 to 2003. DFID does not have equivalent figures for total arable land.

DFID currently provides financial support to a high-level policy body established by the State Council—the China Council for International Co-operation on Environment and Development. It currently has a task force that is looking specifically at agriculture and rural development, including evaluating the change in agricultural land availability. Their results will contribute to monitoring recent trends in land loss and developing approaches to address it. Recent reports from this group indicate that there have been periods of rapid reduction in the available area of land for agriculture over the past 20 years but that there are regional differences. The rate of loss per capita has increased from 0.6 per cent. in 1998 to 2.8 per cent. in 2003. Many academics believe that the overall loss is less than that reported in official statistics. The losses are thought to have resulted mainly from the growth of urban areas and construction, and the conversion of land to forests.

Consultants

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many of the consultants used by his Department since 1997 have been based in *(a)* the United Kingdom, *(b)* the United States and *(c)* the recipient country for the project. [176608]

Hilary Benn: The following figures are in respect of contracts awarded by DFID's Procurement Group since April 2001. DFID does not keep information in the format requested for low value contracts issued by overseas offices or contracts awarded prior to April 2001 and this could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

	Number of suppliers[1]	*UK*	*USA*	*Other*
2003–04	350	282	16	52
2002–03	406	332	16	58
2001–02	497	483	2	12

[1] Some individual suppliers were awarded more than one contract

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much was spent by his Department on the use of consultants in each year since 1997. [176658]

Hilary Benn: Expenditure on consultancy services is recorded in "Statistics on International Development", Table 12. A copy of this publication is available in the Library of the House.

Crisis Management

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management Unit and *(b)* the Policy Planning and

Early Warning Unit of the European Union about the links between environmental degradation, poverty, food security and conflict. [177432]

Hilary Benn: As Secretary of State I have had no direct discussions with these Units. However, DFID officials have been working with EU officials in these areas. One important aspect of discussion has been the European Security Strategy (ESS). The ESS sets out a strategic vision for the European Union's role in tackling global security threats using the range of instruments it has available. Effective implementation of this is a key priority for the European Union.

DFID and EC Officials are actively engaged in a multi-donor Poverty-Environment Partnership that has been producing guidance; and are also working with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on a Poverty-Environment Initiative that seeks innovative solutions in five developing countries.

Departmental Budget

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what progress has been made towards the 5 per cent. reduction in real terms in his Department's administration budget by 2008 announced by the Chancellor in the House on 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 331. [176504]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The real terms reduction of 5 per cent. or more will be a central feature of the public spending settlements for 2006–08 to be announced in detail later this year.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what proportion of the budget of his Department was *(a)* allocated and *(b)* spent in the last quarter of the financial year in each of the last seven years. [176609]

Hilary Benn: DFID does not keep information on the proportion of the budget allocated by quarter. The proportion of the total DFID budget (excluding EC Attribution) spent in the last quarter is as follows:

	Percentage
1997–98	41
1998–99	38
1999–2000	46
2000–01	35
2001–02	35
2002–03	31
2003–04	[1]29

[1] Provisional figure

Departmental Staff

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many staff were employed in the Department to work in the communications field, and what the total expenditure on communications for the Department was, broken down by *(a)* Government Information and Communication Service staff and *(b)* other staff, broken down by (i) press officers, (ii) special advisers and (iii) others, in (A) 1994–95, (B) 1996–97, (C) 1997–98 and (D) 2001–02. [168686]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID does not keep central records of all staff working on communications across the Department and this information could not be gathered without incurring a disproportionate cost for the years specified. Information on the press office is available from 1996–97 and is set out as follows.

	Number of press officers	*Annual cost (£)*
1996–97	6	195,000
1997–98	6	243,000
1998–99	4	240,000
1999–2000	3.3	100,000
2000–01	4.5	150,000
2001–02	4	148,000

The Special Advisers' Code of Conduct sets out the sort of work a special adviser may undertake on behalf of their Minister. This includes communications activity. Details of the costs of Special Advisers are given on an annual basis. Information for the financial year 2003–04 will be published in due course.

East Timor

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the implications for the development of East Timor of the activities of pro-Indonesian militias along the border with West Timor. [177415]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The situation continues to be monitored by both Indonesia and East Timor and by the UN Mission of Support for East Timor (UNMISET). Efforts are being made to defuse remaining animosities. Advice from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office is that activity by former militia force members along the border with Indonesian West Timor does not present a threat to the development of East Timor.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what support is provided by his Department to the United Nations Mission in Support of East Timor. [177416]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID has provided an expert to assist the United Nations Mission with work to build Government capacity. DFID also makes a small contribution through UK Government pooled funds to security sector reform, peace building and reconciliation. DFID's main support to East Timor is the £12 million provided through the World Bank to assist implementation of the National Development Plan.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions he has had with the Government of East Timor about the measures needed for the country to deliver economic self-sufficiency. [177420]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: I met with Prime Minister Alkatiri in June 2003 and President Gusmao in October 2003. We discussed the successful management of the economy since independence, and the many remaining challenges, including work to address capacity constraints, and action to prioritise their limited funds (until the expected oil and gas revenues come on line in 2007–08).

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what his Department's contribution to the National Development Plan in East Timor is in respect of *(a)* education, *(b)* health, *(c)* agriculture and *(d)* infrastructure. [177426]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID is contributing £12 million between 2002–05 to help implement the East Timor National Development Plan through a donor pool managed by the World Bank. The Plan includes support for all government activities, including education, health, agriculture and infrastructure. The DFID contribution is not earmarked to any particular sectors.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the implications of the Australia-Indonesia agreement of 1972 on maritime boundaries for the economic development of East Timor. [177427]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID is aware that East Timor is engaged in negotiations on boundaries with both Australia and Indonesia. The implications of the 1972 Australia–Indonesia agreement are a matter for the parties to the current negotiations. DFID has not made a separate assessment.

Honours

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much time his Department spent dealing with honours in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by civil service grade. [173042]

Hilary Benn: DFID's departmental honours team undertakes the majority of the work on honours. Information is not available on time spent on honours related work, by departmental staff who are not members of the Department's honours team.

The Department for International Development honours team spent a total of 138 days (1,100 staff hours) on honours work, during the year April 2003 to March 2004.

The DFID honours team, chaired by the Permanent Secretary, includes staff at the following grades:

4 × senior civil servants

1 × grade 7

1 × higher executive officer

1 × administrative assistant

Iraq

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on his Department's contribution to tourism development in Iraq. [176033]

Hilary Benn: As part of a-wider plan of development assistance to the Coalition Provisional Authority in Southern Iraq, DFID has funded a secondee who, working in close partnership with the Iraqis is supporting the identification of basic infrastructure requirements for sustainable development in the tourism an heritage sector; taking forward the Archaeological Sites Protection Project in the Southern Provinces; and facilitating the re-establishment of the Al Merbad Festival, a folklore festival initiated 1,600 years ago, and effectively stopped under the previous regime. This secondment has just been completed.

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism was one of the first Iraqi Government Departments to return to autonomous control, and this technical assistance will help the Iraqi Government respond quickly to the needs of the sector.

Official Vehicles

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what percentage of official vehicles used by his Department are run on *(a)* petrol, *(b)* diesel, *(c)* liquid petroleum gas and *(d)* compressed natural gas. [172767]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The Government as a whole have signed up to various targets for improving the performance of their own vehicle fleet, details of which, together with reports on each Department's progress towards these targets, are available at www.sustainable-development.gov.uk.

Two of DFID's three ministerial vehicles are provided by the Government Car Service (GCS.) Detailed information on the breakdown of the GCS vehicle fleet is being provided separately. The remaining vehicle runs on liquid petroleum gas (LPG).

While DFID does not have a significant vehicle fleet, we have put in place a range of measures to reduce the environmental impact of our transport-related activities, such as an award-winning videoconference system linking our offices, facilities for staff who cycle to work, and promotion of public transport alternatives.

Private Security Forces

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the general principles he adopts with regard to *(a)* payments to private security forces and *(b)* payments that may involve the purchase of small arms for security purposes. [176796]

Hilary Benn: On *(a)*, the general principle I adopt is that the overarching purpose of all DFID's activity is to work towards the elimination of poverty. In the very limited number of cases where private security companies might represent the most effective means by which DFID can promote this objective in a specific context, DFID may use services of reputable private security companies for specific narrow purposes. For example, we are using private security companies to protect our staff working in Iraq and Afghanistan. We would also consider using private security companies on security sector reform programmes, for example delivering training, if we judged them the most cost-effective option to deliver a given programme.

On *(b)*, the principle I adopt is that funds allocated for aid programmes and projects should not be used to purchase arms and ammunition. But in respect of funds allocated to the costs of ensuring the security of staff, when DFID employs private security companies to protect staff implementing projects and programmes in dangerous environments, the security situation might sometimes require those companies to carry arms.

Public Attitude Surveys

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what surveys of public perceptions of his Department and of its areas of responsibility have taken place over the last 12 months; what the *(a)* title and *(b)* nature of these surveys was; what the findings of each survey were; where these findings have been published; what the cost of such surveys was; and if he will make a statement and place copies of the surveys in the Library. [176950]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Over the last 12 months, DFID has commissioned two public attitude surveys. The first, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Omnibus Survey on "Public Attitudes Towards Development" is undertaken annually (since 1999) to monitor the attitudes of the UK adult population. The cost of the July 2003 Survey was £32,990. The results are published on the DFID website and are available in the House Libraries. The second, the Market and Opinion Research (MORI) survey on "Attitudes of Schoolchildren towards Development", is undertaken annually (since 2000) to monitor the attitudes of young people. The cost of the January 2004 Survey was £12,220. The results will be published on the DFID website and made available in the House libraries once MORI has finalised the report. The results of both surveys are used to inform, and monitor the impact of, the development awareness work of the Department. The key indication from the 2003 "Public Attitudes Towards Development" survey is that 67 per cent. of the public are concerned about poverty in developing countries.

In 2003, DFID also commissioned focus group work to research how we can increase levels of understanding of, and support for, development within the UK. The cost of this work was £50,309. A summary of the focus group research is published on the DFID website.

Sudan

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what *(a)* personnel resources and *(b)* financial resources his Department intends to allocate to tackling the outbreak of the ebola virus in southern Sudan. [176370]

Hilary Benn: DFID understands that the World Health Organisation (WHO) plans to issue an appeal in the next few days to respond to the Ebola outbreak in Southern Sudan.

Although DFID have no plans to make additional personnel resources available to tackle the Ebola outbreak, we will consider making a contribution to the WHO appeal if needed.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions his Department has had with *(a)* the Sudanese Government and *(b)* the World Health Organisation regarding attempts to contain the recent outbreak of the Ebola virus in southern Sudan; and if he will make a statement. [176371]

Hilary Benn: DFID has not had any direct contact with the Sudanese Government about the outbreak of the Ebola virus in southern Sudan.

However, DFID has been in touch with the World Health Organisation (WHO) about the outbreak. WHO have confirmed the outbreak in Yambio County, Southern Sudan. To date there have been 20 reported cases of whom 10 have been confirmed, with five deaths. Five survivors are in an isolation ward, which has been set up in Yambio hospital by Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) France and WHO. 120 contacts are being traced, of whom 7–10 per cent. are expected to be infected.

DFID will continue to closely monitor the situation.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether his Department intends to make an assessment of the potential impact of the Ebola virus outbreak in southern Sudan on neighbouring countries. [176380]

Hilary Benn: DFID does not propose to send our own assessment team. However, the World Health Organisation (WHO), who are the experts in this field, have sent a six man emergency response team, which includes two of their best Ebola/communicable disease specialists, to investigate and respond to the situation in southern Sudan. This team is producing regular situation reports on their activities, the current situation, and plans for bringing in further personnel.

WHO have indicated that if the outbreak is not contained the outbreak could spread to northern Uganda and the northeast of the Democratic Republic of Congo. WHO is therefore on standby in both countries.

CABINET OFFICE

Emergency Planning

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what plans he has to increase local authority funding for emergency planning. [174688]

Mr. Alexander: The Government are in discussions with the Local Government Association on the issue of local authority funding for emergency planning.

Any additional pressures would be considered as part of established public expenditure processes.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what plans the Government have to establish a professional communications team in the event of a serious emergency. [174677]

Mr. Alexander: In the event of a crisis, emergency or major incident, there are well established, tested procedures in place to activate the Cabinet Office's News Co-ordination Centre (NCC). The NCC supports the Lead Government Department and co-ordinates communications across Government. Regular exercises on the operation of the NCC, which is staffed by communications specialists from across Government, take place.

PRIME MINISTER

Afghanistan

Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister when he next plans to visit Afghanistan. [176789]

The Prime Minister: I have no current plans to do so.

East Timor

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Prime Minister if he will urge the Prime Minister of Australia *(a)* to review his Government's policies on the Timor gap and *(b)* to negotiate a deal with East Timor that is both fair and in accordance with international maritime law. [177422]

The Prime Minister: I regularly have discussions on a wide range of issues with Prime Minister Howard. We welcome the on-going negotiations between Australia and East Timor on this issue and hope that a mutually acceptable solution can be agreed by both parties.

Engagements

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his diary engagements for Wednesday 26 May to Wednesday 2 June inclusive. [177229]

The Prime Minister: In addition to my duties in the House, I met ministerial colleagues and others.

I also made several visits. These were to the University College London hospital, the Wythenshawe hospital in Manchester, the Imperial War Museum North in Manchester to attend an event with Normandy veterans, Whitefield Police Station in Bury and Ecclesfield Police Station in Sheffield.

EU Directives

Mr. Alan Duncan: To ask the Prime Minister whether any EU Directives incorporated into UK law since May 1997 have been *(a)* amended and *(b)* repealed. [176549]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer my right hon. Friend the Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mr. MacShane) gave to him on 20 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1144–45W.

Govan Shipyard

Mr. Blunt: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his answers of 25 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1521–22W, on Govan Shipyard, whether the Openness Team were consulted on the application of exemptions 2 and 7 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information; and on what basis the exemptions were applied. [177429]

The Prime Minister: The exemptions were applied on the basis set out in the answers I gave to the hon. Member on 25 May.

Hunting

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister on how many occasions since 26 November 2003 he has met organisations concerned with the issue of hunting with dogs. [177141]

The Prime Minister: I have meetings with a wide range of organisations and individuals. As with previous Administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings under Exemptions 2 and 7 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Iraq

Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister whether any part of the dossier on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, published on 24 September 2002, used information solely provided by the Iraq National Congress. [176788]

The Prime Minister: No part of the dossier on Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction published on 24 September 2002 relied upon information known to have originated from the Iraqi National Congress.

Israel/Palestine

Tom Cox: To ask the Prime Minister (1) what discussions he has had with the President of the United States of America on the recent Israeli military involvement in the Rafah refugee camp; and if he will make a statement; [177252]

(2) what discussions he has had with the Israeli Government, and with whom, as to the military involvement by the Israeli army in the Rafah refugee camp; and if he will make a statement. [177253]

The Prime Minister: I regularly have discussions with President Bush on a wide range of international issues, including the Middle East. The UK raised its deep concern about Israeli operations in Rafah with the Israeli Government, making clear that such actions were unacceptable and contrary to Israel's commitments under the Roadmap.

We also supported United Nations Security Council Resolution 1544 adopted on 19 May, which condemns all acts of violence, terror and destruction and calls for a cessation of all violence. It also calls for Israel to address its security concerns within the parameters of international law and for both sides to implement their roadmap obligations.

Official Minutes

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister if he will make it his practice to have an official minute taken of all meetings at No. 10 where policy options are considered; and if he will make a statement. [177151]

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Truro and St. Austell (Matthew Taylor) on 9 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1195W.

Prime Ministerial Advisers

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Prime Minister what rules apply to Downing street advisers going to work for commercial companies operating in the sector for which they were responsible. [176955]

The Prime Minister: All civil servants, including special advisers, are subject to the Business Appointment rules. The rules are set out in the Civil Service Management Code, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House.

Public Perception Surveys

Norman Lamb: To ask the Prime Minister what surveys of public perceptions of his role and of its areas of responsibility have taken place over the last 12 months; what the *(a)* title and *(b)* nature of these surveys was; what the findings of each survey were; where these findings have been published; what the cost of such surveys was; and if he will make a statement and place copies of the surveys in the Library. [176945]

The Prime Minister: None.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Career Breaks

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research her Department has carried out on numbers of men and women taking career breaks. [176128]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Department has not carried any research to estimate the number of men and women taking career breaks. However, the findings from The Second Work-life Balance Study: Results from the Employees' Survey (DTI, Employment Relations Research Series, 2004) suggest that 35 per cent. of employees said that it would be possible to take a career break.

Circus Performers (North-west)

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what business opportunities are available for *(a)* clowns, *(b)* tightrope walkers, *(c)* stilt performers, *(d)* unicyclists and *(e)* other circus performers in the north-west; and if she will make a statement. [177134]

Jacqui Smith: No separate assessment has been made of the business opportunities available in the north-west for the named groups.

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what her assessment is of the contribution to the north-west economy that circuses make. [177135]

Jacqui Smith: The North West Development Agency, working in partnership with stakeholders in the region, has the lead responsibility for developing and taking forward the economic development strategy for the north-west.

Tourism is one of the priority sectors but no specific assessment has been made of the contribution circuses make to the north-west economy and there are no plans to do so.

Commission for Equality and Human Rights

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry under what protocols the Commission for Equality and Human Rights will work *(a)* with and *(b)* through the (i) regional development agencies, (ii) the Small Business Service and (iii) ACAS. [175327]

Ms Hewitt: As set out in our White Paper, "Fairness for All: A New Commission for Equality and Human Rights", the CEHR will have a presence in each of the nine English regions. We expect the new body to develop a constructive and productive relationship with key partner organisations such as the regional development agencies, the Small Business Service and ACAS in order to promote compliance and good practice and provide accurate, high quality advice in a range of different formats and through different intermediaries. The new Board, when appointed, will no doubt want to agree arrangements with the partner bodies as soon as practicable.

Govan Shipyard

Mr. Blunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) on which dates in 1999 the former Secretary of State met Mr. George Simpson of GEC; if she will publish minutes of the meetings; and if she will list the attendees at those meetings; [174285]

(2) what communications *(a)* the former Secretary of State, *(b)* his representatives and *(c)* his advisers had with GEC in 1999 over (i) the proposed merger of BAE-GEC and (ii) Govan shipyard; and if she will publish the communications; [174286]

(3) what meetings and communications *(a)* the former Secretary of State, *(b)* his representatives and *(c)* his advisers had with Kvaerner, their representatives or advisers over the proposed closure of the Govan shipyard in 1999; and what advice the former Secretary of State received from (i) his officials and (ii) other departments on the Office of Fair Trading report on the GEC-BAE merger; [174287]

(4) who *(a)* within her Department and *(b)* outside her Department the former Secretary of State consulted on the advice received from the Office of Fair Trading regarding the merger of BAE-GEC; [174288]

(5) what meetings took place between her Department and the taskforce chaired by Sir Gavin Laird set up by the Government to look for potential buyers for the Govan shipyard in 1999; and on what date; [174290]

(6) what meetings took place between the former Secretary of State and with Sir Gavin Laird to discuss the future of the Govan shipyard in 1999; and on what date; [174291]

(7) what the involvement was of the former Secretary of State in the negotiations over the future of Govan shipyard in 1999; [174292]

(9) what the involvement was of the former Secretary of State in informal and oral approaches made to GEC over the purchase of Govan in 1999; [174293]

(9) what meetings took place between Mr. Ed Miliband and *(a)* the former Secretary of State and *(b)* his advisers, representatives and officials in 1999 to discuss the (i) GEC-BAE merger and (ii) Govan shipyard. [174294]

Ms Hewitt: My officials and I have meetings and discussions with a wide range of organisations and individuals. As with previous Administrations it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings, under exemptions two and seven of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Information relating to internal discussion and advice is exempt from disclosure under exemption two of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Under the Fair grading Act (now repealed) the then Secretary of State for Trade and Industry had the power and the responsibility to clear a merger, refer it to the Competition Commission or accept undertakings in order to remedy or prevent the adverse effects to the public interest specified in advice from the Director General of Fair Trading.

Under the Fair Trading Act there was no procedure for consultation on the contents of the Director General of Fair Trading's advice. Accordingly, no consultation was undertaken. However, the contents of the competition and national security undertakings to be sought from BAE Systems in lieu of a reference to the Competition Commission were made publicly available. The reasons for his decision to accept competition and national security undertakings in lieu of a reference are set out in his announcement of 9 September 1999. The Secretary of State also announced on 6 March 2000 the contents of the draft undertakings offered by BAE Systems, and on 28 March 2000 the final undertakings.

Honours

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much time her Department spent dealing with honours in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by Civil Service grade. [173043]

Ms Hewitt: The DTI has a full-time Honours Secretary (Range 8) and had, until September 2003, an Assistant Honours Secretary (50 per cent. of a Range 6 post) who dealt with public nominations and expenses for investitures.

The Permanent Secretary and the Department's Directors General, together with the Head of the Honours Unit (Range 10) and the Honours Secretary take part in the twice yearly formal internal honours meetings.

The majority of the work on honours is undertaken by the departmental honours team. Information is not available on time spent on honours related work by Dpartmental staff who are not members of the Department's honours team.

Inward Investment

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many foreign inward investors have received support through *(a)* regional selective assistance and enterprise grants and *(b)* the Selective Finance for Investment in England scheme since their introduction; what percentage this is of the total number of foreign inward investors locating in the UK; what the average duration was of retained foreign investment secured with the help of these schemes, broken down by region; and how many jobs were (i) projected and (ii) created by these investors. [175958]

Jacqui Smith: Statistics on offers of Regional Selective Assistance (RSA) to foreign owned companies were first published in the Industrial Development Act Annual Report for 1996/97. Copies of the reports are available in the Libraries of the House. In England, 410 such offers were accepted between 1 April 1996 and 31 March 2003. We estimate this to be about 10 per cent. of the total foreign inward investment projects, of which the Department is aware.

All assisted projects are monitored for a minimum period following project completion. However, information is not held regarding the total duration of the investment.

The number of projected jobs associated with the RSA offers is approximately 77,000. To date, around 54,000 have been achieved. As many of these projects are not yet complete this number is expected to increase. SFIE replaced RSA/EG in April of this year. To date, we are not aware of any offers to foreign owned companies. No such records have been maintained for Enterprise Grants (EG), which were available only to Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SMEs).

Maternity/Paternity Leave

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many and what percentage of women in Bootle have taken 26 weeks' maternity leave since 1997. [176528]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Take-up of maternity leave is not recorded centrally. It is possible to make an estimate of the numbers of women taking maternity leave based on employer returns to Inland Revenue of the Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) they recover (since 2003 this has covered the first 26 weeks of leave). Figures for the take-up of SMP are not available on a regional basis, but nationally around 300,000 women receive SMP each year.

In addition, there will be some women who will qualify for maternity leave but not SMP (because they do not meet the earnings or length of employment criteria for SMP) and similarly some who qualify for SMP but not leave (because they are employed earners for the purposes of SMP but not employees in order to qualify for ' leave).

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what mechanism her Department has put in place to assess the take-up by fathers of their statutory right to paid paternity leave since 6 April 2003; what targets for take-up have been set; and how much has been spent informing fathers of their new rights. [176561]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Employers will notify the Inland Revenue of the numbers of employees who have received Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP) in their annual returns for the 2003–04 tax year. No targets for take-up of paternity leave have been set, although our Regulatory Impact Assessment costed the measure on the basis of 70 per cent. take-up of the two-week entitlement.

In the 12 months following implementation the Department spent £1.5 million on an awareness raising campaign promoting the new laws for working parents, which included maternity leave and pay, adoption leave and pay, and the right to request flexible working as well as fathers' rights to paternity leave and SPP. We have also provided support worth £50,000 to the charity Fathers Direct for their pilot magazine aimed at new fathers—'Dad', launched in five different maternity units in April 2003 which included information on their new right to paid paternity leave.

Military Support Vehicles

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the significance of the Ministry of Defence's forthcoming decision regarding the supply and maintenance of military support vehicles for the manufacturing base *(a)* in the West Midlands and *(b)* in the UK. [177462]

Jacqui Smith: This Department has been taking a close interest in the MoD Combat Support Vehicle procurement and has developed and maintained contact with all four of the bidding contractors to understand what each is offering in respect of UK industrial benefit.

National Minimum Wage (Bootle)

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many workers in Bootle have benefited from the national minimum wage. [176529]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not possible to provide estimates specifically for the constituency of Bootle.

However, based on the Office for National Statistics' Low Pay data released in 2003, the DTI estimates that around 140,000 people in the North West stood to benefit from the introduction of the National Minimum Wage in April 1999. Between 130,000 and 160,000 people were expected to have benefited from the October 2003 uprating of the National Minimum Wage.

Official Vehicles

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of official vehicles used by her Department are run on *(a)* petrol, *(b)* diesel, *(c)* liquid petroleum gas and *(d)* compressed natural gas. [172764]

Ms Hewitt: My Department's ministerial vehicles are provided by the Government Car Service. Detailed information on the breakdown of the GCS vehicle fleet is being provided separately and I wish to refer to the answer provided by my colleague in the Cabinet Office.

The Government as a whole have signed up to various targets for improving the performance of their own vehicle fleet, details of which, together with reports on each Department's progress towards these targets, are available at: www.sustainable-development.gov.uk

While my Department does not have a vehicle fleet, it has put in place a range of measures to reduce the environmental impact of its transport-related activities e.g. promoting public transport, teleconferencing. Contracts for the delivery of services to the DTI HQ estate encourage the use of environmentally friendly fuelled vehicles.

Phthalates

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether, within EU discussions, the Government have supported a permanent ban on phthalates in specified toys and child care articles. [177230]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government supported the temporary ban (introduced in 1999) on the use of six named phthalates in toys and child use and care articles intended to be mouthed by children under 36 months. However, we continue to believe that the use of phthalates in any such articles for children must be considered on a case-by-case basis. We will give careful consideration to the draft proposal which the Commission intends to circulate in the near future.

Royal Mail

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on Royal Mail's performance against letter and package delivery targets in London. [176613]

Mr. Timms: Royal Mail published Quarter 4 cumulative quality of Service Report (for April 2003 to March 2004) on 27 May 2004. This stated that the company had failed to meet its performance targets in the wake of last year's strikes and through the major change programme currently being undertaken. A copy can be viewed on the Royal Mail website www.royalmail.com and a copy of the report has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Royal Mail's top priority is to improve its quality of service performance. It has drawn up detailed plans to tackle these problems and Ministers have Allan Leighton's personal assurance that these will be implemented vigorously. We are confident that the management is committed and determined to put things right.

TVS UK Ltd.

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made *(a)* of the number of UK manufacturers and suppliers that are involved in TVS UK Ltd and *(b)* TVS UK's significance to the UK defence industrial base. [177458]

Jacqui Smith: DTI officials have been holding a dialogue with TVS UK Ltd (Stewart and Stevenson) to assess the UK industrial benefits coming from their bid to be the preferred contractor for MoD's Combat Support Vehicle procurement. I also took the opportunity to meet with LDV (representing TVS) earlier this year to receive a personal briefing on the value of their bid to the UK manufacturing economy.

Similar discussions have been taking place with the other three contractors bidding for this programme.

Working Week (Bootle)

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents of Bootle have been affected by a reduction of the working week to 48 hours. [176997]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations provide workers with the right to refuse to work more than 48 hours on average, if they do not want to. Numbers for Bootle are not available. However, it has been estimated that around 300,000 workers resident in the north-west stood to benefit from the introduction of the weekly working time limits in 1998.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

School Buses

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on maintaining school buses free of charge to children. [175057]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Free transport is always necessary for a pupil of compulsory school age (five to 16) who attends the nearest suitable school if it is beyond statutory walking distances. These are two miles for pupils aged up to eight and three miles for those aged eight and over. This is measured by the shortest route along which a child, accompanied as necessary, may walk with reasonable safety.

Free transport might exceptionally be necessary for a five to 16-year-old who lives within walking distance of school, or who does not attend the nearest suitable school: it is for a local education authority to consider such a case on its merits. In addition, they have discretion to provide assistance in a wide range of other circumstances. It is for each LEA to decide on its discretionary transport policy in line with local priorities and to defend it locally.

The current school transport legislation dates to 1944 and has not kept pace with changes to the education system. There are also growing concerns about congestion on the school run, pollution, obesity and lack of exercise. The draft School Transport Bill would seek to allow a small number of local authorities to address the serious environmental and practical issues caused by increasing car use on the school run, and provide attractive alternatives to the family car on the home to school journey.

The Bill will allow pilot authorities to charge fares for those in receipt of school transport, but only at a level which will not increase car use. There are also a number of safeguards built in. Only LEAs that volunteer to become pilots following local consultation will be able to charge and I will then have to approve schemes. While the draft Bill provides as a minimum for pupils entitled to free school meals (FSM) to receive free transport, we hope LEAs will experiment with different approaches to means testing, e.g. considering number of children in family, those just above FSM income cut-off etc.

A National Voice

Mr. Dawson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what comments the Government has made to the future funding of A National Voice; and what guarantees have been made to the Prince's Trust in respect of their mentoring role. [175712]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 26 May 2004]:* The Government recognise the particular value of A National Voice as the only organisation campaigning to improve the quality of public care for children and young people that is actually led by care-experienced young people.

That is why DfES has awarded a Safeguarding Children and Supporting Families Grant to the Prince's Trust for its work as "host organisation" to A National Voice. This award can only be spent on a National Voice. Subject to the terms and conditions set out in the grant award letter this offers funding to A National Voice for the current and next two financial years of up to £100,000 per year.

A-Levels (Funding)

Mr. Steinberg: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average funding per student studying A levels at *(a)* a sixth form college, *(b)* a further education college and *(c)* a sixth form attached to a comprehensive school is in the 2004–05 financial year. [176442]

Alan Johnson: Under the Learning and Skills Council's funding formula the basic cost to the public purse of delivering three A-levels in a sixth form college and a further education college to a student in the 2004/05 academic year will be £3,045. This figure comprises £766 for the delivery of each A-level learning aim, and £747 for each student for the entitlement element of their learning programme. Under the LSC's funding formula the basic cost to the public purse of delivering three A-levels to a student at an English maintained secondary school will be £3,212. This figure comprises £785 for the delivery of each A-level learning aim, £750 for each student for the entitlement element of their learning programme, and £107 for each student to meet additional employers' contributions to teachers' pensions. These figures do not represent all funding that colleges and schools receive and are not directly comparable. For example the further education funding rates include consolidated funds for pay and staff training that are not reflected in the school sixth form rates. Also, in each case additional funding may also be available to take account of the higher costs of delivering learning in particular geographical areas, in higher cost subjects, or to students with particular disadvantages or individual needs.

Bureaucracy

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many tasks introduced by the Government since 1997 have been removed as a result of the reduction in bureaucracy initiatives over the past 12 months. [175917]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 25 May 2004]:* The "Making a Difference—Red Tape and Bureaucracy in Schools Second Report" published in March 2003

identified 125 separate actions to reduce or remove elements of bureaucracy identified through visits to schools and discussions with head teachers. By May this year, 79 of these actions had been completed.

Beyond these specific actions, the independent Implementation Review Unit (IRU) panel of serving heads, teachers and a bursar, has worked with policy officials throughout the development of the 'New Relationship with Schools'; a programme which I announced in January to work with schools in a different way, based on a high degree of professional trust. Schools' interactions with government, in terms of planning, data requests, communications and accessing funding and support will become simpler and more streamlined. Work is also in hand for using a single school plan to replace separate bidding requirements.

In addition, the 'National Agreement on Raising Standards and Tackling Workload' is freeing teachers from unnecessary burdens and ensuring that their time is focused on teaching and learning. Since last September, teachers can no longer routinely be required to carry out administrative and clerical tasks, including 21 specific tasks listed in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions document. There are more changes to come; from September 2004 there will be a 38 hour annual limit on cover for absent colleagues, and from September 2005 all teachers will be entitled to guaranteed time within the school day for planning, preparation and assessment.

Within the further education and training sector, we are working with the Learning and Skills Council to reduce bureaucracy by simplifying administration for all providers, and we are committed to implementing the 30 recommendations made in the Bureaucracy Task Force's first report. Progress has been made including the reduction of funding streams to the LSC from 45 to 5 in 2003/04. The LSC is implementing plan led funding from 2004/05, and we have established the Bureaucracy Review Group. This is an independent group chaired by Sir Andrew Foster and comprising members from the major provider groups in the sector, to assess new and existing policies and their implementation, challenging the Department, the LSC and other bodies as necessary to remove bureaucratic burdens.

In higher education, the independent Better Regulation Review Group, chaired by David Vandelinde, reports that significant progress has been made in implementing the five recommendations contained in the Better Regulation Task Force's report 'Higher Education: Easing the burden'.

Capital Funding (Brighton and Hove)

Mr. Lepper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much capital funding was allocated to schools in Brighton and Hove in each year since 1996–97. [176577]

Mr. Miliband: The following table sets out the capital support given by the Government to Brighton and Hove local education authority (LEA) since 1997–98 including devolved formula capital grants to each school. We do not have separate information for 1996–97 when Brighton and Hove was part of East Sussex LEA.

£000

	Capital allocations
1997–98	3,926
1998–99	3,698
1999–2000	5,636
2000–01	7,661
2001–02	[1]28,614
2002–03	5,487
2003–04	7,573
2004–05	[2]12,584
2005–06	[2]2,933

[1] Includes £24.5 million of PFI credits
[2] Allocations not yet complete.

Child Care

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what action his Department has taken in response to the recommendations made by the National Audit Office in its report, Progress in Developing High Quality Childcare and Early Education Accessible to All, published on 27 February, on the *(a)* expansion of, *(b)* sustainability and *(c)* the quality of child care provision; and if he will make a statement. [177518]

Margaret Hodge: I was pleased that the National Audit Office report acknowledged the good progress that had been made in creating new child care places and recognised the Government's achievement in providing free, part-time early education for 3 and 4-year-olds. There is now one child care place for every four children under the age of 8, whereas in 1997 there was only one place for every eight children. In addition, since the report was published, we have extended the offer of a free, part-time early education place to cover all 3-year-olds.

The Government fully accept the view, expressed in the report, that although a great deal has been achieved, there is still more to be done; and we have welcomed the recommendations. The areas highlighted in the report—the creation of places in disadvantaged areas, the sustainability of places, and the provision of training and support for providers—are ones where we are making particular efforts as we work towards our vision of good quality, accessible, and affordable child care for all parents who want it.

Children's Commissioner for England

Ms Coffey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what decisions he has made on the role of children and young people in the selection of a Children's Commissioner for England. [176570]

Margaret Hodge: Children and young people will play an important role in the selection of the new Children's Commissioner for England. The exact form that their participation will take is currently under consideration.

Children's Trusts

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether it is his policy that children's trusts should take responsibility for youth offending teams. [175836]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 25 May 2004]*: Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) may become members of a Children's Trust where this is locally agreed. The Youth Justice Board has issued revised guidance on YOT structures. This includes issues to be considered when determining local arrangements, such as ensuring that YOTs retain strong links to criminal justice and crime reduction agencies and partnerships. Where a YOT does not join a Trust, it will still be important to plan in a joined up way to ensure that services are coherent.

Connexions

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether there are limitations on the power Connexions partnership chief executives have to appoint or remove members of its board of directors. [172673]

Margaret Hodge: The Department has no authority to impose limitations on the power of chief executives of private organisations. The authority of chief executives is agreed by the partnership's board. This, and the board's authority to appoint or remove members of the board of directors, is specified within their Articles of Association.

Education Services (Essex)

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people were employed in state schools in *(a)* the County of Essex in each year from 1980 to 1997 and *(b)* the County of Essex and the unitary authorities of Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock in each year from 1998 to 2003. [173325]

Mr. Miliband: The available information is shown in the following tables. The first table shows the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) regular teachers and support staff in maintained schools in Essex LEA in each January between 1992 and 1998. Information is only available from 1992 when support staff data were first collected. The second table shows the number of FTE regular teachers and support staff in Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock LEAs after local government re-organisation in April 1998, in each January between 1999 and 2003.

Information on the number of teachers and support staff by LEA from 1997 to 2003 is available in the School Workforce Volume, 2003 edition. This is available from the House of Commons Library or at the following URL: www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/VOL/v000443/index.shtml

Full-time equivalent regular teachers and support staff[1]

	Essex LEA
1992	15,090
1993	15,010
1994	15,380
1995	16,060
1996	16,760
1997	17,390
1998	17,520

Note:
Sixth form colleges are included in 1992.

Full-time equivalent regular teachers and support staff[1]

	Essex LEA	*Southend-on-Sea LEA*	*Thurrock LEA*	*Total*
1999	14,850	1,920	1,740	18,500
2000	14,920	2,120	1,780	18,810
2001	15,660	2,240	1,900	19,800
2002	16,790	2,530	2,010	21,300
2003	17,060	2,600	2,080	21,730

[1] Includes nursery assistants, special needs support staff, minority ethnic pupil support staff, secretaries, bursars, lab assistants design technology assistants, I.T. technicians, librarians, welfare assistants, learning mentors, child care staff in boarding schools and any other staff regularly employed in schools but excluding technicians medical staff in nurseries.

Source:
Teacher numbers: Annual Survey of Teachers in Service and Teacher Vacancies
Support Staff: Annual School Census

Education Statistics (London)

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in (i) London and (ii) Brent are expected to have a budget deficit in the current financial year. [172801]

Mr. Miliband: There are 230 (12.2 per cent.) of primary schools and 100 (24.1 per cent.) of secondary schools in deficit within Greater London. There are 12 (20 per cent.) of Brent primary schools and five (36.7 per cent.) of Brent secondary schools in deficit. Information on the current year 2004–05 will not be available until the summer of 2005.

Excellence in Cities Programme

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Blackpool North and Fleetwood have benefited from the Excellence in Cities programme; and what the per pupil spending was in each year since the programme's inception. [176203]

Mr. Miliband: The following table shows the number of children in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood benefiting from EiC, and the annual spend per pupil for the years in question.

	Number of children	*Total EiC expenditure*[1] *(£)*	*Spend per pupil (£)*
2001–02	2,812	169,297	60.21
2002–03	3,839	425,566	110.85
2003–04	3,989	1,108,479	277.88

[1] All funding figures supplied by Blackpool Excellence in Cities Team.

The increase in the rate of EiC funding and the number of pupils benefiting in 2002–03 was due to the Education Action Zone coming under the control of the EiC Partnership. The increase in funding in 2003–04 was due to the introduction of the Leadership Incentive Grant and the Behaviour Improvement Programme.

Further Education

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to provide

funding to help further education colleges in the Worthing area specifically to refurbish and rebuild their estates. [175446]

Alan Johnson: All of the Department's post-16 learning and skills sector capital investment is allocated to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The Department does not provide a specific budget to the LSC for rebuilding and refurbishing property in further education colleges at either the local or regional levels. It is for the LSC to determine for itself the right level of capital investment in further education colleges. Mr. Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will write to the hon. Member on this matter and a copy of his reply will be placed in the House Library.

Gender Pay Gap

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the pay gap between men and women employed by his Department and its agencies in *(a)* Southampton, *(b)* Eastleigh, *(c)* Winchester and *(d)* Romsey. [171638]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department does not employ people in Southampton, Eastleigh, Winchester or Romsey.

Illiteracy

Mr. Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate he has made of the functional illiteracy rate amongst *(a)* 11 to 18 year olds and *(b)* adults in (i) Manchester, Blackley, (ii) Manchester and (iii) England. [174622]

Mr. Miliband: 'Functional illiteracy' is usually thought to be equivalent to Entry Level literacy as defined in the National Standards for Adult Literacy and Numeracy, which in turn is equivalent to below a G grade at GCSE English language. For students aged between 11 and 18 the Department does not currently hold data on entry level qualifications. This information should be available from next year for pupils at the end of compulsory schooling.

The DfES Skills for Life survey published in October 2003 provides estimates of the proportion of people in England who are at various literacy and numeracy skill levels as defined by the National Standards for Adult Literacy and Numeracy.

The Skills for Life survey estimates that for the Manchester Learning and Skills Council area 18 per cent. of adults have Entry level literacy skills. For England this proportion is 16 per cent.

Unfortunately, data is not yet available at sub-LSC level. However the Department is in the process of developing a website which will give users access to estimates of literacy and numeracy skills at local levels. This website should be online at the end of 2004.

Intercountry Adoption

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many intercountry adoptions have taken place in each year since 1994. [172216]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 19 May 2004]:* This information is not available centrally. The following table shows the number of intercountry adoption applications processed since 1994 by the Department of Health and since June 2003 by the Department for Education and Skills:

	Number of applications
1994	113
1995	150
1996	310
1997	221
1998	258
1999	277
2000	351
2001	326
2002	285
2003	300

Local Authority Secure Units

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many local authority secure unit beds there were in each of the past 10 years; how many beds are projected to be provided in the next five years; and if he will make a statement. [175467]

Margaret Hodge: Secure children's homes provide accommodation for young people placed for the protection of themselves or others, and for those placed under criminal justice legislation by the Youth Justice Board. The following table provides information on the number of approved places in secure children's homes over the past 10 years.

Officials have been working closely, both with the Youth Justice Board and the Association of Directors of Social Services, to consider the implications for secure children's homes of the Youth Justice Board's decision to use fewer beds in local authority secure units.

We understand that a few secure children's homes will now close, and that a few others may close, on the basis that they will no longer be viable. For this reason, we are at this time unable to project the exact number of beds in secure children's homes over the next five years.

However, officials are looking very closely at the demand, including any unmet need, for welfare placements in order to ensure that there are sufficient beds across the country for children who need to be placed in a secure children's home for welfare reasons.

Our aim is to achieve the best quality service for vulnerable children who, for whatever reason, need a placement in secure accommodation.

Places approved/available to secure accommodation at 31 March

	Places approved/available
England	
1994	290
1995	265
1996	275
1998	330
1999	415
2000	435
2001	435
2002	430
2003	425
	425

Source:
SA1 return

Medical Courses (Drop-out Rates)

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the drop-out rate for students studying medicine on courses which lead to registration as a doctor was in the latest year for which figures are available. [176245]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* Figures are not held centrally. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HECFE) publish non-completion rates of students on full-time undergraduate courses in "Performance Indicators in Higher Education", but these are not calculated for individual subjects, courses or entry qualifications.

It is generally agreed that non-completion rates are low in medicine and dentistry. For example, for full-time first degree students starting their course in 2000–01, St George's Hospital Medical School, the only remaining free-standing medical school in England, has a non-completion rate of 6 per cent. The overall non-completion rate for full-time first degree students at UK HE institutions, who began their studies in 2000–01, was estimated by the Higher Education Funding Council for England to be 16 per cent.

Medical Students

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 11 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 300W, on medical students, how many of the 95 students have ceased to pursue studies leading to registration with the General Medical Council and subsequent practice as a doctor. [175415]

Alan Johnson: Figures are not held centrally. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HECFE) publish non-completion rates of students on full-time undergraduate courses in 'Performance Indicators in Higher Education', but, these are not calculated for individual subjects, courses or entry qualifications.

It is generally agreed that non-completion rates are low in medicine and dentistry. For example, for full time first degree students starting their course in 2000/01, St. George's Hospital Medical School, the only remaining free-standing medical school in England, has a non-completion rate of 6 per cent. The overall non-completion rate for full-time first degree students at UK HE institutions, who began their studies in 2000–01, was estimated by the Higher Education Funding Council for England to be 16 per cent.

National Child Care Strategy

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many children in Blackpool North and Fleetwood have benefited from the National Childcare Strategy; [176204]

(2) how many child care places have been created in Blackpool North and Fleetwood since 1997. [176209]

Margaret Hodge: The Department is unable to provide details of child care places for Blackpool North and Fleetwood. However, from April 1999 to March 2004 Blackpool local authority created 3,060 new child care places helping some 5,505 children. This shows an increase in the stock of child care places, taking into account turnover, of 2,149 helping some 3,899 children.

Pre-school Places

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* free nursery and *(b)* pre-school places were available for (i) three and (ii) four-year-olds in Blackpool North and Fleetwood in each of the last seven years. [176205]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available in the form requested.

Figures on the number of free nursery education places taken up by three and four-year-olds in Blackpool local education authority area are shown in the table.

The latest figures on provision for three and four-year-olds in England were published in a Statistical Bulletin 'Provision for children under five years of age in England—January 2003' which is available on the Department's website www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/.

From April 2004, six months ahead of our original target, all three-year-olds in England whose parents want one, are eligible for a free, part-time early education place.

Number of free nursery education places[1,2] taken up by three and four-year-old children in maintained nursery and primary schools and private, voluntary and independent providers
Blackpool local education authority area: 1997–2003
Position in January each year

	Three- year-olds	*Four-year-olds*
1997	500	1,600
1998	500	1,600
1999	300	1,500
2000	1,600	1,400
2001	1,400	1,600
2002	1,400	1,600
2003	1,400	1,600

[1] Part-time equivalent number of free nursery education places taken up by three and four-year-old children.

[2] A free nursery education place comprises five two and a half hour sessions of early years education per week, for thirty-three weeks of the year, usually three terms of eleven weeks.

Pupil Spending (Elmet)

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the spending was per pupil *(a)* in the primary sector and *(b)* in the secondary sector for schools in the Elmet constituency in each year since 1996. [173931]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is submitted to the Department according to local education authority areas rather than districts within an area. Elmet is a district of Leeds local education authority. The information for Leeds LEA is as follows.

Net current expenditure per pupil

£

	Primary education	*Pre-primary and primary*	*Secondary education*
1996–97	n/a	1,933	2,542
1997–98	n/a	1,870	2,601
1998–99	n/a	2,092	2,727
1999–2000	2,278	2,299	2,773
2000–01	2,537	2,577	3,047
2001–02	2,739	2,807	3,588
2002–03	3,005	3,036	3,680

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from Leeds LEA's section 52 Outturn Statement submitted to the DfES from 1999–2000 onwards and the ODPM's RO1 statement previously. Expenditure was not distinguished between pre-primary and primary sectors until the inception of the section 52 outturn statement in 1999–2000. Leeds LEA does not have any pre-primary pupils for the years 1999–2000 onwards so there is no pre-primary split to show. 1999–2000 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance.

2. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they include an apportionment of LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers. 2002–03 data are subject to change by the LEA. Figures are rounded to the nearest £10.

3. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEAs.

4. The NCE per pupil figures for pre-primary and primary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in the pre-primary sector and maintained primary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained nursery and primary schools sector.

5. The NCE per pupil figures for secondary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained secondary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained secondary schools sector.

6. The NCE per pupil figures for special schools relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained special schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained special schools sector.

7. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

Schools (Fire Prevention)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to extend the use of *(a)* cavity barriers in roofs and *(b)* non-combustible panels in compartmentation when (i) refurbishing existing school buildings and (ii) constructing new school buildings. [176563]

Mr. Miliband: New construction at schools is now covered by the Buildings Regulations. The use of cavity barriers in roofs and non-combustible panels in compartmentation will continue to be needed when refurbishing existing school buildings and constructing new school buildings to counter spread of fire and facilitate means of escape in case of fire in accordance with current Building Regulations, specifically Approved Document Part B, Fire Safety.

Schools (Support Staff)

Stephen Hesford: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what his latest estimate is of the number of support staff working in schools; and if he will make a statement. [176036]

Mr. Miliband: In January 2004 there were 241,700 full-time equivalent support staff employed in maintained schools in England—an increase of over 100,000 since 1997. Further information was published on 29 April in the School Workforce in England statistical first release, a copy of which has been placed in the House of Commons Library and can be accessed from the following URL: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000462/index.shtml

Teacher numbers rose by 4,000 over the past year. This is excellent news for schools as they remodel their workforce and creates new capacity to raise standards.

Secondary Schools

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the lowest number of secondary school students in a Staffordshire school is. [174566]

Mr. Miliband: Provisional January 2004 figures show that the lowest number of pupils in a maintained secondary school within Staffordshire Local Education Authority was 310.

Social Sciences

Mrs. Lawrence: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of state-funded PhD students studied social sciences in the last year for which figures are available. [174134]

Alan Johnson: The latest available information for these students enrolled on PhD courses in the UK shows that 8 per cent. were studying within social sciences.

Special Educational Needs

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) pursuant to the answer of 17 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 712W, on special educational needs, how much funding has been made available for professional development of teachers in relation to special educational needs for *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in each of the last five years; [176054]

(2) pursuant to the answer of 17 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 712W, on special educational needs, how many teachers have received professional development training in relation to special educational needs in each of the past five years; and what elements this training comprised. [176055]

Margaret Hodge: Schools have the autonomy within their overall school budgets to determine how much they make available for training purposes in the light of their own priorities and needs. It is therefore not possible to disaggregate funding for professional development in relation to special educational needs.

For the last five years, the SEN component of the Department's Standard Fund, which local authorities and primary and secondary schools could use to support training and development of teachers and other staff, was:

	£ million
2000–01	55
2001–02	82
2002–03	91
2003–04	81
2004–05	[1]84

[1] SEN element of the new School Development Grant.

Information on actual take-up of professional development by teachers is not collected centrally.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what monitoring takes place of Special Education Needs Tribunal (SENDIST) panels; and what statistics are kept of judgments by individual SENDISTs of *(a)* findings in favour of parents and *(b)* dismissals of appeals. [176081]

Margaret Hodge: The President of the Tribunal observes a sample of hearings in order to monitor the performance of chairmen. She also reviews panels' decisions and pursues vigorously all complaints about the conduct of hearings. SENDIST plans in the coming year to introduce a more formal appraisal system for tribunal chairs and members.

Detailed statistics of the outcomes of appeals are published annually in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Annual Report. This sets out numbers of appeals upheld and dismissed in terms of type of appeal, type of special educational need and type of school. It also sets out the number of appeals registered for each local authority and the number of appeals per 10,000 of the school population.

Sports Facilities (Blackpool, North and Fleetwood)

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money has been invested in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood to build long-term school sports facilities. [176397]

Mr. Miliband: The majority of capital funding is now allocated to schools and local education authorities by needs related formulae. They decide how to target this investment in line with local asset management plans.

The Department does not, therefore, have complete information about the amount and type of capital investment at constituency level. This should be held by the local authorities concerned. The following tables set out the total capital support made by the Department to both Blackpool and Lancashire local education authorities (LEAs) and its schools since 1997–98.

Capital allocations: Blackpool LEA and schools

	Total (£000)
1998–99	2,571
1999–2000	3,955
2000–01	6,930
2001–02	8,302
2002–03	6,632
2003–04	17,035

Note:
Blackpool LEA was established in 1998–99 following local government re-organisation.

Capital allocations: Lancashire LEA and schools

	Total (£000)
1997–98	13,288
1998–99	16,957
1999–2000	35,179
2000–01	38,021
2001–02	29,778
2002–03	46,470
2003–04	62,607

To date we have allocated a further £20.2 million for Blackpool LEA in 2004–05 and 2005–06 and a further £53.8 million for Lancashire LEA for 2004–05 and 2005–06.

Furthermore, the New Opportunities Fund has provided schools in the Blackpool and Lancashire LEA areas with over £14 million specifically to enhance PE and school sport facilities.

State Schools

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many state schools there are; and of them, how many are voluntary-aided schools. [174733]

Mr. Miliband: The data requested are shown in the table.

Maintained primary and secondary schools[1]: Number of schools by status

January 2004 (provisional v3) England

	Number of schools	
	Primary	Secondary
Voluntary aided	3,748	554
Community	11,066	2,217
Voluntary controlled	2,584	124
Foundation	364	513
Total	17,762	3,408

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.

Source:
Annual Schools' Census

Final 2004 figures will be published in September.

Statistics

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 12 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 428W, on statistics, if he will list the percentage of those aged 16 to 18 years participating in education, training and employment by *(a)* labour market status and *(b)* gender for the last five years. [174758]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Estimates of 16 to 18 year olds participating in education and training by labour market status and by gender are shown in Table 1 and Table 2 for the latest two academic years, end 2001 and end 2002.

The figures in the tables are taken from the Statistical First Release (SFR) publication, SFR 31/2003, entitled 'Participation in Education, Training and Employment by 16–18 year olds in England: 2001 and 2002', which was produced using post-Census population estimates. Historic population estimates are not yet available on a comparable basis and therefore participation rates are only available for the last two years and these estimates cannot be compared with those in previous SFRs which used pre-Census population estimates and projections.

Participation in education and training by labour market status and by gender for end 2001 and end 2002 (provisional)

Table 1: End 2001 — *Percentage*

Activity	*Females*	*Males*	*All*
In full-time education	59	53	56
In training[1]	17	21	19
In work (excluding those education and training)[2]	15	16	15
ILO Unemployed[3]	4	7	6
Inactive[4]	5	2	4
Total[5]	100	100	100

Table 2: End 2002 (provisional) — *Percentage*

Activity	*Females*	*Males*	*All*
In full-time education	60	53	57
In training[1]	16	20	18
In work (excluding those education and training)[2]	14	16	15
ILO Unemployed[3]	4	7	6
Inactive[4]	5	3	4
Total[5]	100	100	100

[1] 'In training' includes those young people in work based learning (WBL), employer funded training (EFT) and other education and training (OET).

[2] Some young people in education and training will also be in employment. However, these numbers have not been included in the 'In work' figures.

[3] MLO unemployed1 covers anyone who is out of work and available to start work in the next two weeks, but has either looked for work in the last four weeks or is waiting to start a job they have already obtained.

[4] 'Inactive' includes those neither in employment nor ILO unemployed, that is—not active in the labour market.

[5] The totals are calculated from unrounded figures and so may not be the sum of the individual cells.

Student Loan Company

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the operation of computer software at the Student Loan Company; and whether potential applicants have been prevented from applying prior to the deadline due to operational problems. [176114]

Alan Johnson: We have been modernising the arrangements for the delivery of higher education student finance over recent years. Central to this modernisation is the new IT system, implemented by the Student Loans Company, which LEAs are now using to assess and process paper applications. There have been some teething problems with the system, which you would expect with an IT project of this size and complexity. However, at this stage we have no strong concerns that students who apply on time will not receive payment at the start of term. We are of course monitoring the situation closely.

The intention was that the new IT system would also provide a service for students to make their applications on-line from this April. However, in order to give the national launch of the new IT system in LEAs the best chance of success, we have decided to delay the introduction of this service. This reflects the fact that this year we had always expected the vast majority of students to apply using paper forms. Postponing the launch of the online facility has not prevented in anyway students from making applications for support on-time as paper application forms have been made readily available to them as in previous years. We remain committed to providing an on-line service in line with e-government targets.

Student Loans (Online Applications)

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the start-up costs for enabling students to apply for student loans online are; and what the running costs will be in each year up to 2007–08. [176418]

Alan Johnson: The new higher education student finance IT system will not only provide an online application facility for students. The same system is also being used by local education authorities to assess and process paper applications from students and by the customer support office, operated by the Student Loans Company, to answer student queries. It is therefore not possible for us to provide separate figures for the development and running costs of the online facility as these costs are integral to the costs of the system as a whole.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will estimate the number of students who will apply for student loans online in each year up to 2007–08. [176419]

Alan Johnson: We are currently developing a strategy for the promotion of this online service in future years and would therefore expect the proportion of students making their applications online to increase over time. We will of course continue to provide a service for students who wish to make their applications using a paper form.

Teachers (Brighton and Hove)

Mr. Lepper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many full-time equivalent teachers were working in schools in Brighton and Hove in each year since 1996–97. [176576]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested has been published in table A2 of the School Workforce in England volume, 2003 edition. A copy of this has been placed in the House of Commons Library. The volume can also be accessed from the following URL: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgatewav/DB/VOL/v000443/index.shtml

Tuition Fees

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many undergraduate students from *(a)* Taunton constituency and *(b)* Somerset are attending university; and how many of these undergraduate students pay (i) no tuition fee and (ii) a partial tuition fee. [175622]

Alan Johnson: In England and Wales, students on full-time undergraduate courses and their families are expected to make a contribution towards the cost of their tuition only if they can afford to do so.

For entry in 2002, there were 2,710 applicants domiciled in Somerset LEA who were accepted through UCAS to full-time first degree and HMD courses at UK institutions. Data on the number of students from the constituency of Taunton attending university are not available.

The number and percentages of students in England and Wales in academic year 2002/03 (latest year for which data are available) who have been assessed to make a nil or partial contribution towards the cost of their tuition are shown in the table:

England and Wales: Academic year 2002/03 (provisional)

	Student support scheme student numbers (000)[1]	*Student support scheme students (%)*[1]
Nil contribution towards the cost of tuition from student/parents/ spouse/ partner[2]	330	43
Partial contribution towards the cost of tuition from student/ parents/spouse/ partner	116	15

[1] Contributions towards the cost of tuition are assessed by local education authorities in England and Wales for students normally domiciled in their area and studying in the UK.
[2] Includes students on courses where the fee support was not subject to income-assessment (e.g. PGCE courses, and some other ITT courses; and designated courses at private institutions).
Note:
National level data are published annually in the Departments Statistical First Releases (SFRs) (SFR 12/2004 for 2002/03).
Data are collected from the local education authorities (LEAs) to produce national estimates and the data collection exercise does not allow for the production of firm figures below this level. Therefore data by Constituency or local education authority are not available.
Source:
F503G survey of local education authorities

Voluntary Family Support Agencies

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much financial support is provided to voluntary family support agencies by *(a)* the Government and *(b)* each local authority. [175503]

Margaret Hodge: The Department for Education and Skills made £8.34 million available in support of voluntary family support organisations for the financial year ended 31 March 2004.

In addition £6.96 million was made available, through Sure Start programmes, to a range of voluntary sector organisations for work with children and families. However, it is not possible to identify what proportion has been used specifically on family support activities.

Information on the level of financial support provided to voluntary family support agencies by each local authority is not held centrally.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Asbestosis

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much compensation has been paid from public funds in respect of asbestosis victims in Northern Ireland in each year since 1997. [176888]

Mr. Gardiner: Compensation for asbestos sufferers in Northern Ireland is administered by the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) and Harland and Wolff (H and W) plc.

DEL administers the Pneumoconiosis Worker's Compensation Scheme which was established by the Pneumoconiosis Etc (Workers Compensation) Order 1979. The scheme provides compensation for sufferers (or their dependants) who are unable to claim damages from the employers where the dust exposure which caused the disease occurred, as the employers have ceased to carry on business. DEL has paid out the following amounts under the Pneumoconiosis Workers Compensation Scheme since 1997.

£

	Amount
1997–98	51,378
1998–99	61,530
1999–2000	nil
2000–01	27,900
2001–02	65,308
2002–03	205,689
2003–04	120,153
Total	531,958

H and W plc assumed responsibility for the settlement of Employer's Liability and Public Liability insurance claims in 2001, following the collapse of the company's insurer (Iron Trades Mutual Society). The majority of these claims have centred around asbestosis and mesothelioma suffers. H and W plc has paid out the following amounts under the Employer's Liability and Public Liability insurance claims since 2001.

£

	Amount
2000–01	171,288
2001–02	2,753,909
2002–03	4,368,638
2003–04	5,943,468
Total	13,237,302

In addition to the above, during the period 1 April to 31 May 2004 H and W plc paid £1,276,249 in insurance claims.

Departmental Secondments

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many staff in his Department

and its agencies were seconded from the *(a)* private and *(b)* academic sector in each of the last three years. [175363]

Mr. Pearson: In the last three years there have been 22 inward secondments from the private sector and 12 from the academic sector to the 11 departments of the Northern Ireland Administration and its agencies. In the same period there were no inward secondments from either of these sectors to the Northern Ireland Office.

Further detail is provided in the following table:

	Private sector	*Academic sector*
2001	11	1
2002	9	4
2003	2	7

Drug Seizures

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the value of each type of illegal drug seized in the Province in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004. [176853]

Mr. Pearson: The street value of illicit drugs seized by the Police Service of Northern Ireland in 2003–04 and April 2004 are detailed in tables A and B. The latest published figures of drugs seized in Northern Ireland by Her Majesty's Customs and Excise are for the period 2002–03 and are detailed in Table C.

The value of drugs seized within Northern Ireland prison establishments is not calculated.

Table A: Street value of drugs seized by PSNI 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004

Drugs seized	*Amount seized*	*Price per unit*[1] *(£)*	*Total value (£)*
Cocaine			
Powder (gms)	11,470.91	80/gram	917,672.80
Wraps	6	40/wrap	240.00
Crack cocaine (gms)	9.2	150/gram	1,380.00
Ecstasy			
Tablets (April-October 2003)	163,316	10/tablet	1,633,160.00
Tablets (November 2003-March 2004)	59,572	5/tablet	297,860.00
Powder (gms)	72.14	37.50/gram	2,705.25
Capsules	20	12.50/capsule	250.00
LSD			
Doses	0	5/dose	0
Microdots	6	4/microdots	24.00
Opiates			
Powder (gms)	189.89	100/gram	18,989.00
Tablets	3	12/tablet	36.00
Ampoules	20	45/ampoule	900.00
Mls	163.57	45.00/ml	7,360.65
Wraps	2	40/wrap	80.00
Amphetamine			
Powder (gms)	17,310.77	10/gram	173,107.70
Tablets	58	5/tablet	290.00
Wraps	35	10/wrap	350.00
Cannabis			
Resin (gms)	2,204,235.82	5/gram	11,021,179.10
Herbal (gms)	32,849.58	10/gram	328,495.80
Plants	1,173	600/plant	703,800.00
Joints	212	2.50/joint	530.00
Oil (gms)	0	50.00/gram	0

[1] Price per unit assessed by PSNI with reference to the National Drug Price Guide compiled by the National Criminal Intelligence Service.

Table B: Street value of drugs seized by PSNI 1 April 2004 to 30 April 2004

Drugs seized	*Amount seized*	*Price per unit*[1] *(£)*	*Total value (£)*
Cocaine			
Powder (gms)	488.78	80/gram	39,102.40
Wraps	0	40/wrap	0
Crack cocaine (gms)	0	150/gram	0
Ecstasy			
Tablets	1,381	5/tablet	6,905.00
Powder (gms)	30	37.50/gram	1,125.00
Capsules	0	12.50/capsule	0
LSD			
Doses	0	5/dose	0
Microdots	0	4/microdot	0
Opiates			
Powder (gms)	0	100/gram	0
Tablets	0	12/tablet	0
Ampoules	0	45/ampoule	0
Mls	0	45/ml	0
Wraps	0	40/wrap	0
Amphetamine			
Powder (gms)	2,311.52	10/gram	23,115.20
Tablets	0	5/tablet	0
Wraps	0	10/wrap	0
Cannabis			
Resin (gms)	3,365.85	5/gram	16,829.25
Herbal (gms)	221	10/gram	2,210.00
Plants	14	600/plant	8,400.00
Joints	11	2.50/joint	27.50
Oil (gms)	0	50/gram	0

[1] Price per unit assessed by PSNI with reference to the National Drug Price Guide compiled by the National Criminal Intelligence Service.

Table C: Street value of drugs seized by HMCE 1 April 2002 to 31 March 2003

Drugs seized	*Amount seized*	*Price per unit*[1] *(£)*	*Total value (£)*
Cocaine			
Grams	1,690	80/gram	135,200
Ecstasy			
Tablets	6	10/tablet	60
Cannabis			
Grams	20,186	10/gram	201,860.00

[1] Price per unit supplied by Her Majesty's Customs and Excise with reference to the National Drug Price Guide compiled by the National Criminal Intelligence Service.

Eating Disorders

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what recommendations from the recent National Institute for Clinical Excellence guidelines on eating disorders he expects to introduce in Northern Ireland. [176876]

Angela Smith: Guidelines produced by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) are only applicable to England and Wales; there is no statutory requirement to implement NICE guidelines in Northern Ireland. The Department is considering how guidelines issued by NICE can be fully assessed and applied in the context of Northern Ireland's health and social services.

Work is currently underway to establish an Eating Disorder Service and at this stage of early development it is not possible to identify which recommendations in the NICE guidelines would be applicable. In setting up the service the evidence based work contained in the guidelines will be taken into consideration.

Government Investment

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much Government investment in the *(a)* manufacturing and *(b)* non-manufacturing sector there was per employee in Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years. [173649]

Mr. Gardiner: The principal forms of Government support for the manufacturing and non-manufacturing sectors of industry are provided by Invest NI and its predecessor agencies and the table therefore provides details of the assistance offered by Invest NI, the Industrial Development Board and the Local Enterprise Development Unit to their respective client companies. The assistance is expressed as a per capita amount offered, per employee in client companies in each of the respective sectors.

The figures relate to assistance offered to companies in relation to business development projects as this represents the major form of funding provided. Providing equivalent figures relating to all other forms of assistance offered by these agencies could be provided only at disproportionate cost. The information in the table is restricted to the five year period from 1998–99 to 2002–03 as meaningful comparative data are not available for earlier years and are not yet available for 2003–04.

Invest NI assistance offered per client company employee: 1998–99 to 2002–03

£

	Manufacturing	*Non-manufacturing*
1998–99	583	1,571
1999–2000	705	1,740
2000–01	533	2,068
2001–02	476	723
2002–03	646	636

Grammar Schools

Mr. Mallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what capital expenditure there has been on each school in the grammar school sector in each year since 1989. [176531]

Mr. Gardiner: Records are not readily available about the level of capital expenditure there has been, for both major and minor works, on each school in the grammar school sector since 1989. However, since 1994, the amount of capital investment announced for major capital works projects at each school in the grammar school sector is as follows:

	Projects	*£ million*
1994–95		
Nil	—	—
1995–96		
St. Columb's College, Londonderry	New build extension	11.5
1996–97		
Limavady GS	New build extension	6.4
Grosvenor GS, Belfast	New build extension and refurbishment	4.4
1997–98		
Lumen Christi College, Londonderry	New build extension and refurbishment	5.1
1998–99		
Aquinas GS, Belfast	New school	10.1
1999–2000		
Wellington College, Belfast	New school	6.4
Glenlola Collegiate, Bangor	New school	11.9
Thornhill College, Londonderry	Phase 1 of new school	10.6
St. Patrick's GS, Armagh	Phase 1 extension	1.8
Royal School, Dungannon	New build extension and refurbishment	8.0
2000–01		
Regent House School, Newtownards	Phase 1 new build extension	6.7
Antrim Grammar School	New build extension and refurbishment	7.7
Dominican College, Belfast	New build extension and refurbishment	13.1
Mount Lourdes GS, Enniskillen	New build extension and sports hall	6.3
2001–02		
Rathmore GS, Belfast	New school	17.0
Convent GS, Strabane	Amalgamation with St. Colman's HS and Convent of Mercy HS to form new school	20.0
2002–03		
Our Lady and St. Patrick's College Knock, Belfast	New school	17.7
St. Patrick's GS, Downpatrick	New school	11.8
Thornhill College, Londonderry	Phase 2 of new school	4.1
Regent House School, Newtownards	Phase 2 of extension and refurbishment	8.9

	Projects	£ million
2003–04		
St. Joseph's GS, Donaghmore	New school	11.6
St. Patrick's Academy, Dungannon	New school	17.5
St. Dominic's HS, Belfast	Extension and refurbishment	16.7
Assumption GS, Ballynahinch	Extension and refurbishment	17.2
Strathearn School, Belfast	New school	10.0
Grosvenor G.S.	New school	11.5
Abbey Christian Brothers' GS, Newry	New school	12.2
Dominican College, Portstewart	New sports hall	0.9
Mount Lourdes GS Enniskillen	Refurbishment of existing accommodation	9.7
St. Colman's College, Newry	New sports hall	1.2
2004–05		
Banbridge Academy	Extension and refurbishment	17.8
Strabane GS	New school	11.6
Rainey Endowed School, Magherafelt	New school	14.2
Loreto GS, Omagh	New school	14.6
St. Colman's College, Newry	Extension and refurbishment	10.1

Health Services

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the waiting time is for *(a)* emergency, *(b)* urgent and *(c)* routine dermatology assessment in each health trust area; and how many patients are waiting in each case. [176846]

Angela Smith: Information requested in parts *(a)–(c)* is not collected centrally.

Information on patients awaiting a first outpatient appointment is collected at Trust and specialty level. The latest available waiting list statistics show the position at 31 December 2003.

Table 1: Number of patients awaiting a first out-patient appointment in the Dermatology specialty

Provider Trust	Time waiting (months)					
	0–2	*3–11*	*12–17*	*18–23*	*24+*	*Total*
The Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust	766	786	128	45	53	1,778
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	929	432	8	0	0	1,369
Ulster Community and Hospitals HSS Trust	859	1,444	255	229	353	3,140
Down and Lisburn HSS Trust	238	314	99	34	16	701
Mater Infirmorum HSS Trust	86	178	63	77	1	405
Causeway HSS Trust	390	493	210	3	2	1,098
United Hospitals HSS Trust	668	567	165	106	169	1,675
Craigavon Area Hospitals Group HSS Trust	700	379	7	5	1	1,092
Newry and Mourne HSS Trust	406	57	0	0	0	463
Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust	130	31	0	0	0	161
Altnagelvin Area Hospitals HSS Trust	988	486	2	0	0	1,476
Northern Ireland Total	6,160	5,167	937	499	595	13,358

Source:
Regional Information Branch, DHSSPS

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the level of co-ordination and co-operation between the Province's health boards and trusts in relation to differences in waiting times for particular specialties at different hospitals. [176847]

Angela Smith: Health and Social Services boards and trusts are working closely together, and with the Department, to reduce hospital waiting times across Northern Ireland. A number of initiatives are being taken forward to ensure that available hospital capacity is being used as fully as possible. These initiatives include the transfer of patients between hospitals to facilitate earlier treatment, and the use of hospital facilities by visiting specialists from other hospitals to provide elective care for the local population.

The level of collaboration between boards, trusts and the Department has been an important factor in reducing waiting times. Recognising this, my Department has recently established a Regional Waiting Lists and Emergency Pressures Steering Group comprising representatives from the Department, boards and trusts which will ensure that our efforts to reduce waiting times continue to be properly directed and co-ordinated across Northern Ireland.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the waiting times are for *(a)* initial outpatient assessment deemed (i) emergency, (ii) urgent and (iii) routine, *(b)* cataract surgery and *(c)* operations in general, within the ophthalmology specialty, at each hospital in the Province where such surgery is performed. [176848]

Angela Smith: Information requested at parts *(a)* (i)-(iii) and *(b)* is not collected centrally. Information on patients awaiting a first out-patient appointment or in-patient admission is collected at Trust and specialty level. The latest available waiting list statistics show the position at 31 December 2003.

(a) At 31 December 2003 there were 16,985 patients in Northern Ireland awaiting a first out-patient appointment with an Ophthalmology consultant (Table 1).

Table 1: Patients awaiting a first out-patient appointment in the Ophthalmology specialty

Provider trust	Time waiting (months) 0–2	3–11	12–17	18–23	24+	Total
The Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust	1,950	2,433	305	64	29	4,781
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	115	78	7	2	0	202
Ulster Community and Hospitals HSS Trust	841	1,006	265	55	90	2,257
Down and Lisburn HSS Trust	244	373	114	6	1	738
Mater Infirmorum HSS Trust	660	410	2	2	1	1,075
Craigavon Area Hospital Group HSS Trust	463	1,043	227	98	40	1,871
Newry and Mourne HSS Trust	251	451	156	97	180	1,135
Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust	135	210	80	74	33	532
Altnagelvin Area Hospitals HSS Trust	1,251	2,139	583	254	167	4,394
Northern Ireland	5,910	8,143	1,739	652	541	16,985

Source:
Regional Information Branch (DHSSPS)

(c) At 31 December 2003 6,346 patients were awaiting admission to hospital in the Ophthalmology specialty (Table 2).

Table 2: Patients awaiting admission to hospital in the Ophthalmology specialty

Provider trust	Time waiting (months) 0–2	3–11	12–17	18–23	24+	Total
The Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust	1,516	2,036	306	148	41	4,047
Mater Infirmorum HSS Trust	359	367	10	3	0	739
Down and Lisburn HSS Trust	78	138	3	0	0	219
Craigavon Area Hospitals Group HSS Trust	133	254	55	4	0	446
Altnagelvin Area Hospitals HSS Trust	406	436	48	5	0	895
Northern Ireland	2,492	3,231	422	160	41	6,346

Source:
Regional Information Branch (DHSSPS)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of patients were admitted to hospital within nine months of referral for admission in the last year for which figures are available. [176855]

Angela Smith: 149,916 patients were admitted to hospital in Northern Ireland as elective admissions during 2003. 91 per cent. of these patients were admitted within nine months of referral.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to introduce waiting time targets for hospital admissions. [176857]

Angela Smith: Reducing the length of time that patients wait for hospital admission is a key priority. I have already set targets this year in relation to the length of time patients wait for elective treatment which require Health and Social Services Boards and Trusts to ensure that, by 31 March 2005, 95 per cent. of patients requiring hospital inpatient or day case treatment are admitted within 12 months of being placed on a list; and that, other than in exceptional circumstances, no patient should be waiting for inpatient or day case treatment for more than 18 months by 31 March 2005, or more than 15 months by 31 March 2006.

In relation to emergency admissions I have set a target by 31 March 2005 to reduce by one third the number of patients waiting more than two hours in an accident and emergency department between the decision to admit and admission to a ward compared to 2003–04 levels.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of patients were assessed by a specialist within two weeks of emergency referral in the last year for which figures are available. [176863]

Angela Smith: The information requested is not available.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of patients diagnosed with breast cancer were tested for HER2 in each health board area in the last year for which figures are available. [176869]

Angela Smith: All women diagnosed with breast cancer in Northern Ireland are automatically tested for HER2.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken to improve technology used to detect sexually transmitted infections. [176870]

Angela Smith: From 1 September 2004 the Nucleic Acid Amplification Technique (NAAT) will be used across Northern Ireland to test for Chlamydia, the most common bacterial sexually transmitted infection within the UK.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many consultant dermatologists there are in each health board area; and what plans there are to increase the number. [176871]

Angela Smith: Information in response to the first part of this question is as follows:

Number of consultant dermatologists in each health board area as at 31 March 2004

Health board area	*Headcount*	*Whole-time equivalent*
Eastern	10	7.83
Southern	2	1.90
Western	2	1.91
Northern	2	2.00
Total	16	13.64

Staffing is the responsibility of Health and Social Services Trusts, taking into account factors such as service needs and available resources. However, the Department has a role in ensuring that sufficient suitably qualified staff are available to meet the needs of the service and to monitor workforce levels in Trusts. This will be done through workforce planning mechanisms, which provide an analysis of the current workforce and of current and future recruitment and retention issues and encompasses issues such as the number of staff required to meet service demands. As at September 2003 there were seven specialist trainees in dermatology, which, allowing for retirements, is sufficient to increase consultant numbers to a projected level of 17 by 2010. The position, as with all hospital-based specialties, is reviewed annually and this informs decisions on investment in the future numbers in training.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many breast cancer patients were diagnosed in the last 12 months in the Province; and how many received treatment with Trastuzumab. [176880]

Angela Smith: Information on the number of breast cancer patients diagnosed in the last 12 months is not available. Information on the number who received treatment with Trastuzumab is not available centrally and could be made available only at disproportionate cost.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* consultations, *(b)* operations and *(c)* other procedures took place within the private sector in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by specialty. [176850]

Angela Smith: The information requested is not available.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the availability of *(a)* telemetry and *(b)* other cardiac monitoring equipment during periods of high workload at local hospitals in Northern Ireland. [176851]

Angela Smith: The current level of cardiac monitoring and telemetry equipment at hospitals is adequate to cope with current demands, even during periods of high workload.

Irish Language

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many Irish language advertisements were placed by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in each of the past three years. [176805]

Angela Smith: The number of Irish language adverts placed by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in each of the past three years are as follows:

April to March	*Number of Irish Language adverts*
2001–02	52
2002–03	71
2003–04	69

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many Irish language applications were received by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in each of the past three years. [176806]

Angela Smith: In each of the past three years, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has not received any job applications written in Irish.

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total cost of Irish language advertisements placed by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety was in each of the past three years. [176807]

Angela Smith: The total cost of Irish language advertisements placed by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in each of the past three years is as follows:

April to March	*Total cost for Irish advertising (£)*
2001–02	51,337.13
2002–03	38,197
2003–04	33, 845.91

July Orange Celebrations

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans the Department of Culture, Media and Sport has to promote this year's 12 July Orange celebrations as an inward tourist attraction symbolising British culture in the Province. [175696]

Mr. Gardiner: The Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) features the 12 July Orange parades on the events page of its consumer website www.discovernorthernireland.com. NITB has encouraged the Orange Order to supply any information that could be useful for promotional purposes.

Maiden City Festival

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much public funding has been allocated through Northern Ireland departments to the Maiden City Festival in Londonderry in each of the last three years. [176631]

Angela Smith: Funding for the Maiden City Festival from the Northern Ireland Departments has totalled £355,000 over the previous three years. This was comprised of £100,000 in 2001–02; £155,000 in 2002–03 and £100,800 in 2003–04.

Medical Prescriptions

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when electronic transmission of medical prescriptions will commence in Northern Ireland. [176865]

Angela Smith: A project that will include electronic transfer of prescriptions between community pharmacists and the Central Services Agency is currently being developed. The project timetable indicates that implementation will begin in May/June of 2005 with roll-out across HPSS due to be completed in September 2006. This project does not include electronic transfer of prescriptions from GP practices but planned developments in the NHS will be monitored with the intention of learning from their experience and introducing similar facilities in Northern Ireland.

Milk Cup Tournament

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the value to the Northern Ireland economy of the annual Milk Cup Football tournament. [175904]

Angela Smith: The Northern Ireland Events Company, sponsored by the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure, has supported this event and commissioned independent research into the benefits generated by the 2003 NI Milk Cup. The report indicated that the value to the Northern Ireland economy was around £570,000. A copy of the full report will be placed in the Library.

Classroom Assistants (Braille)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many classroom assistants were trained in Braille in each of the last five years, broken down by board area. [176872]

Mr. Gardiner: Training of this nature is generally sourced directly by schools in response to the needs of individual pupils and this information is therefore not readily available. However, Education and Library Boards have, in some cases arranged training in Braille for classroom assistants. The North Eastern Education and Library Board trained five classroom assistants in 2002; one in 2000; and one in 1999 while the South Eastern Education and Library Board trained one classroom assistant in 2001.

Health Care

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to introduce national service frameworks in healthcare in Northern Ireland. [176873]

Angela Smith: National service frameworks are produced for the NHS in England. Although they have not been introduced to the health and social services in Northern Ireland, local service reviews over recent years in areas such as cardiac surgery and cardiology, cancer, renal services and diabetes have incorporated elements of national service frameworks where appropriate. In line with the Government's plans to raise standards of health and social care services in Northern Ireland, the need for further work in this area is being considered at present.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the costs to public funds arising from back pain in each of the last five years. [176874]

Angela Smith: We estimate that the cost of treating complaints with a diagnosis of back pain in a hospital in-patient or day-case setting in Northern Ireland was £4.2 million in 2001–02 and £5.2 million for 2002–03. Further information is not available.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what funding has been provided for *(a)* dermatology and *(b)* sleep disorders in each of the past five years. [176877]

Angela Smith: My Department has not earmarked funding specifically for either dermatology or sleep disorders in each of the past five years. Expenditure on the treatment of sleep disorders is not available but expenditure over the last five years on the dermatology specialty in a hospital inpatient, day case or outpatient setting is as follows:

£ million

Year ending March	*Dermatology expenditure*
1999	7.8
2000	8.0
2001	8.5
2002	8.7
2003	9.1

Mortality Statistics

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of deaths were due to *(a)* respiratory disease, *(b)* cardiac disease and *(c)* cancer in Northern Ireland in (i) the last year for which figures are available, (ii) 1994, (iii) 1984 and (iv) 1974. [176878]

Mr. Pearson: The following table gives the percentage of all deaths registered in Northern Ireland in 2003, 1994, 1984 and 1974 caused by *(a)* respiratory disease[1], *(b)* circulatory disease[2] and ischaemic heart disease[3] and *(c)* cancer[4].

[1] International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision codes J00-J99 for year 2003, Ninth Revision codes 460–519 for years 1994 and 1984 and Eighth Revision codes 460–519 for year 1974.
[2] International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision codes I00-I99 for year 2003, Ninth Revision codes 390–459 for years 1994 and 1984 and Eighth Revision codes 390–458 for year 1974.
[3] International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision codes I20-I25 for year 2003, Ninth Revision codes 410–414 for years 1994 and 1984 and Eighth Revision codes 410–414 for year 1974.
[4] International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision codes C00-C97 for year 2003, Ninth Revision codes 140–208 for years 1994 and 1984 and Eighth Revision codes 140–207 for year 1974.

Table: Number and percentage of all registered deaths in Northern Ireland caused by respiratory disease, circulatory disease, ischaemic heart disease and cancer: 1974, 1984, 1994 and 2003

	Number of deaths				Percentage of deaths			
Cause of death	*1974*	*1984*	*1994*	*2003*[1]	*1974*	*1984*	*1994*	*2003*[1]
Respiratory disease	2,223	1,952	2,398	2,082	12.8	12.4	15.9	14.4
Circulatory disease	9,153	8,178	7,011	5,448	52.8	52.1	46.4	37.7
Ischaemic heart disease	4,713	4,867	4,168	2,843	27.2	31.0	27.6	19.7
Cancer	2,866	3,290	3,595	3,757	16.5	21.0	23.8	26.0
All deaths	17,326	15,692	15,114	14,462	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

[1] Data for 2003 are provisional

MOT Testing

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many vehicles entered the MOT test in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years; and how many failed. [175531]

Angela Smith: The number of full tests and re-tests (previous test failures) carried out by the Driver and Vehicle Testing Agency for all vehicle categories for which roadworthiness certificates are required, including those generally referred to as MOT tests, is set out in the following table. It should be noted that the re-test figures can include multiple re-tests on a single vehicle. The re-test figures do not include vehicles that fail the full test but are not subsequently presented for re-test.

	Number of full tests	*Number of re-tests*
1999–2000	438,022	89,209
2000–01	439,746	86,432
2001–02	463,386	92,360
2002–03	483,776	103,732
2003–04	516,100	120,104

Nurses

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the cost to public funds of employing each additional nurse. [177200]

Angela Smith: Newly qualified nurses are usually appointed at a starting salary of £17,060 per annum. The overall salary cost for an employer in respect of a newly qualified nurse is estimated as £19,875 per annum.

Physical Punishment

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he intends to publish his Department's response to the Office of Law Reform's consultation paper, Physical Punishment in the Home—Thinking about the Issues, Looking at the Evidence. [176543]

Mr. Pearson: Officials in the Office of Law Reform have prepared an analysis of the responses to the Consultation Paper—"Physical Punishment in the Home—Thinking about the Issues, Looking at the Evidence"—which they are aiming to publish in mid-June.

A copy of the analysis will be placed on the Office of Law Reform's website and I have asked for a copy to be forwarded to the hon. Lady as soon as it becomes available.

Proceeds of Crime (Northern Ireland) Order

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average length of time has been for assets of defendants to be frozen in cases while they were being prosecuted under the Proceeds of Crime (Northern Ireland) Order 1996. [176894]

Mr. Pearson: The information requested cannot be provided as data are not recorded in a way which would allow an accurate assessment to be made of the average length of time that defendants assets are frozen. A restraint order is obtained at the outset of criminal proceedings when an individual is charged or is about to be charged and remains in force until any confiscation order is satisfied in full.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people have had their assets frozen while being prosecuted under the Proceeds of Crime (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 in each year since the introduction of the order. [176895]

Mr. Pearson: A substantial manual search of records is required to collate the information requested. I will write to the hon. Gentleman with this information once it is available. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library.

Proscribed Terrorist Organisations

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the implications for counter-terrorist policy of the ruling of 26 May of Mr. Justice Girvan, in the case of Mullan and others, about the definition of proscribed terrorist organisations. [177392]

Mr. Pearson: Following the RIRA judgment, the Attorney-General announced on 28 May that he would refer the ruling to the Court of Appeal. It would be inappropriate to comment further on matters which could be before the Court. It is however the Secretary of State's position that RIRA was proscribed under the Terrorism Act and he remains of the view that RIRA should be proscribed. The Secretary of State has made it clear that he will take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that RIRA is proscribed.

Sick Leave

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the number of work days lost as a result of *(a)* depression, *(b)* stress-related illness and *(c)* back pain in each of the last five years. [176875]

Mr. Gardiner: Information on the number of working days lost as a result of *(a)* depression, *(b)* stress-related illness or *(c)* back pain is not available for Northern Ireland.

However, for information, latest figures from the Winter 2003–04 Labour Force Survey estimated that in the previous year 12,000 people suffered from a back problem and 8,000 people suffered from stress or depression that was caused or made worse by a job or work done in the past.

Sleep Apnoea

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the number of sleep apnoea sufferers in Northern Ireland in each of the last 20 years. [176854]

Angela Smith: Current estimates suggest that in Northern Ireland there are 30,000 people with sleep apnoea of whom approximately 3,000 are categorised as having clinically significant sleep apnoea. Precise figures and historical data are not available.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the number of sleep apnoea sufferers receiving treatment with continuous positive airway pressure machines in Northern Ireland. [176859]

Angela Smith: It was estimated in September 2003 that there were approximately 430 sleep apnoea patients on continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) machines in Northern Ireland.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many clinics for sleep apnoea sufferers there are in the Province. [176861]

Angela Smith: A designated sleep apnoea clinic is held regularly in the Department of Respiratory Medicine at the Belfast City Hospital.

Other hospitals in Northern Ireland have clinics which can assess sleep apnoea patients as well as patients with other respiratory problems.

Small Businesses

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much public money was spent on assisting small businesses in Northern Ireland during 2003. [176633]

Mr. Gardiner: Invest NI records and reports information on a financial year basis as opposed to a calendar year basis, therefore this response relates assistance to Invest NI clients in the financial year 2003–04.

In 2003–04 a total of £56.45 million was offered to companies falling within the definition small businesses (less than 50 employees). This figure reports assistance offered rather than money that has actually been paid. Information on offers is more indicative of the current activities and policies of Invest NI as most of the payments in any one year relate to offers of assistance made in a number of previous years.

South Armagh Terrorist Incidents

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what investigations have been carried out into possible collusion between the Provisional IRA and officers in the Gardai Siochana in the Irish Republic concerning terrorist incidents in the South Armagh area in early 1985 which resulted in 13 RUC officers being murdered. [176581]

Mr. Pearson: The Chief Constable has not raised this issue with me and since it is principally a matter for the Government of the Republic of Ireland I would advise the hon. Gentleman to write directly to the Department of Justice, Equity and Law reform.

Teenage Abortions

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many abortions there were among females from Northern Ireland aged 11 to 19 years in each year since 2000, broken down by age. [175226]

Angela Smith: The information requested is not available.

HEALTH

Accident and Emergency Services

Martin Linton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of patients were seen within four hours of presenting at accident and emergency departments at *(a)* St. Helier and *(b)* St. George's Hospital in 2003–04. [175875]

Mr. Hutton: This information is collected at national health service trust level rather than individual hospital unit. Information for St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust and Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust is available at http://www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity.

Copies are available in the Library.

Martin Linton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients presented in accident and emergency in *(a)* St George's NHS Trust Hospital and *(b)* St Helier NHS Trust Hospital in each of the past four years; and if he will make a statement. [175209]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the number of attendances at accident and emergency for each National Health Service trust is published and available at http://www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity.

Copies of the tables for each quarter from 2001–02 are available in the Library. Prior to this, information was published annually in Outpatient and ward attenders, England, copies of which are available in the Library.

Acupuncturists

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether his proposals for statutory regulation of herbal medicine and acupuncture will require health practitioners using the title acupuncturist but registered with existing statutory bodies to be subject to additional regulation if they wish to continue to use the title acupuncturist. [175986]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* On 2 March the Department published proposals for the statutory regulation of herbal medicine and acupuncture practitioners. The consultation period closes on 7 June. We are aware of the interests of acupuncturists registered with existing statutory bodies and will consider their representations very carefully.

Addenbrooke's Hospital/Papworth NHS Trust

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health who the members are of the patients' forum for *(a)* Addenbrooke's Hospital and *(b)* the Papworth NHS Trust. [176086]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Following a period of consultation to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998, the names of patients' forum members will be available on the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health website from 1 July 2004. Names will be listed under each forum and contact can be made through the appropriate forum support organisation.

Agency Nurses

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the cost to the NHS of agency nurses was in 2002–03 in *(a)* each strategic health authority and *(b)* each NHS trust; [167393]

(2) how much was spent by each NHS trust on agency nurses in the latest year for which figures are available. [172704]

Mr. Hutton: The information in cash terms has been placed in the Library.

Air Ambulance

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of air ambulances in *(a)* saving lives and *(b)* reducing morbidity. [175588]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Previous research in the early 1990s did not demonstrate that the benefits of helicopter ambulances in terms of outcomes for patients were sufficient to justify investment in these services by the national health service. Since then, development of the helicopter ambulance service nationally and wider developments in emergency care have created a new environment within which the performance of helicopter ambulances can be assessed. The Department has therefore commissioned primary research to examine the role and effectiveness of air ambulance services in the modern NHS. The first stage, which reviewed the current research evidence, has now been completed. The report can be found at www.shef.ac.uk/scharr/mcru/reports/HEASrev.pdf

In light of the findings of the report, the Department is currently considering further research.

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients were transported to NHS hospitals in England by air ambulance in 2003. [175589]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost of air ambulance services to the NHS was in 2003. [175590]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally. The Department informed ambulance services and their commissioners in January 2002 that the cost of clinical staff on air ambulances should, from 1 April 2002, be met by the National Health Service on a continuing basis.

Alzheimer's

Mr. Lyons: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action his Department will be taking to support Alzheimer's Awareness Week from 13 to 20 June. [176467]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government is a keen supporter of Alzheimer's awareness week. It is essential that awareness of the needs of people with dementia and of their carers is raised, to help ensure that those needs are met.

Ambulance Services

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations he has received on the distribution of equipment to ambulance trusts to prepare for a major terrorist attack. [166411]

Mr. Hutton: The Department has received a number of parliamentary questions and items of correspondence from hon. and right hon. Members. I refer the hon. Member to the responses I gave to the hon. Member for Newark (Patrick Mercer) on 30 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1374–75W.

Asthma

Mr. Greenway: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to investigate the impact of particulates in air pollution in causing asthma. [175822]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department's Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollution (COMEAP) is producing a report on air pollution and asthma. It will include the effect of airborne particle exposure on people with asthma. The report is expected to be published in 2005 and will update COMEAP's last report on this subject, which was published in 1995.

Breastfeeding

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions he has had with his ministerial colleagues in the Department of Culture, Media and Sport about restrictions on the advertising of breastmilk substitutes in line with the World Health Organisation code of practice. [174624]

Miss Melanie Johnson: No discussions have taken place with Ministerial colleagues in the Department of Culture, Media and Sport about the restrictions on the advertising of breastmilk substitutes in line with the World Health Organisation code of practice. Currently we are exploring with the Food Standards Agency ways in which elements of the European Community Directive on infant formula could be better aligned to the international code.

Bureaucracy Statement (Briefing)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether his Department's officials provided briefing to journalists on 19 May concerning the content of his written statement to the House on 20 May on reducing bureaucracy in the NHS. [175697]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 5 May 2004]:* My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health announced the review of departmental arm's length bodies to the Health Select Committee on 30 October 2003, and officials have answered media inquiries on the progress of the review on a number of occasions since then.

Care Homes

Mr. McCabe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the number of general practitioners who *(a)* own, *(b)* part own and *(c)* manage care homes for the elderly in England. [175581]

Dr. Ladyman: I understand from the chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) that the CSCI has not made any estimate of the number of general practitioners who own, part own or manage care homes for elderly people in England. However, a report issued by the NCSC in March 2004, "The management of medication in care services 2002–03" stated that 161 care homes for older people were registered to people who called themselves "doctor" in 2002–03.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many residential and nursing home beds were available in *(a)* England and *(b)* each local authority at the end of each year since 1996–97. [172735]

Dr. Ladyman: The table shows the number of residential and nursing care home places for people aged 18 and over in England at 31 March for the years 1997 to 2001. Information on residential care home places by council with social services responsibilities (CSSR) and nursing care home places by health authority (HA) has been placed in the Library.

Figures for later years have been collected by the National Care Standards Commission but comparable details broken down by CSSR and HA are not available.

Number of residential and nursing care home places at 31 March 1997 to 2001, England

Rounded numbers

	Residential care home places	*Nursing care home places*[1]
1997	338,140	196,270
1998	347,910	205,590
1999	344,040	202,150
2000	345,910	193,330
2001	341,180	186,830

[1] Includes places in general nursing homes, mental nursing homes, private hospitals and clinics.

Source:
Department of Health forms RA, RH(N) and K036.

Care Qualifications

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have qualified with NVQ level 2 in care in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [175920]

Mr. Hutton: The following table shows the number of people in England who have achieved their national vocational qualification (NVQ) level 2 in care from April 2000 to December 2003. These people can be working in either social care or health care settings, as the statistics do not state what job the candidate has and the care NVQ level 2 is undertaken by both social care workers and health care workers.

Prior to April 2000, this data on NVQs was only collected on a United Kingdom basis and it was not possible to determine how many of the candidates worked in England.

Period	*Number of care NVQ level 2 certificates issued*
January-December 2000	8,451
January-December 2001	12,637
January-December 2002	17,932
January-December 2003	25,025
Total	64,045

Carers

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been spent on supporting carers in Warrington North in each year since 1997. [176411]

Dr. Ladyman: The carers grant was introduced in 1999 to support councils in providing short breaks for carers to enable them to continue in their caring role. The table shows carers grant allocations for Warrington.

£

	Allocations
1999–2000	64,664
2000–01	156,906
2001–02	217,673
2002–03	264,498
2003–04	334,900
2004–05	417,725

Details of any additional funds used to support carers are not held centrally.

Charges to Overseas Visitors

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many charities working in international development were contacted in the consultation exercise on proposed changes to the National Health Service (Charges to Overseas Visitors) Regulations 1989; what representations they made; and if he will make a statement; [175867]

(2) what the cost was of the consultation exercise in relation to the proposed changes to the National Health Service (Charges to Overseas Visitors) Regulations 1989; [175868]

(3) how many copies of the consultation document on proposed changes to the National Health Service (Charges to Overseas Visitors) Regulations 1989 were printed; and how many responses were received. [175869]

Mr. Hutton: Copies of the consultation document were sent to a wide range of organisations with an interest in these matters, including several charities working with asylum seekers and other overseas visitors. A copy of the summary of outcomes document, which lists all those who responded to the consultation, is available in the Library, together with copies of 122 of the 124 responses received. The remaining two respondees exercised their right to have their responses remain confidential.

1,000 copies of the consultation document were printed. The print and estimated mailing costs for the consultation exercise were just under £3,000.

Immigration

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether a chest x-ray is mandatory at a port of entry for immigration in the United Kingdom where it is clinically indicated. [174002]

Miss Melanie Johnson: It is a matter for the clinical judgment of the medical inspector at a port of entry whether to refer a person seeking entry to the United Kingdom for an x-ray or other diagnostic examination. Medical inspectors are also able to pass entrants' details to the national health service at their destination address, so that any further can be offered locally.

Chronic Disease Management

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what opportunities patients' groups will have for input into plans for chronic disease management clinics. [173920]

Mr. Hutton: The involvement of patients and patient groups is a crucial part of the strategy that the Department and the national health service are developing to deliver better services to people with chronic conditions. To that end we shall be encouraging primary care trusts to engage fully with patient groups in developing their plans.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if his Department will publish exemplars for chronic disease management clinics; [173921]

(2) what criteria he is using to select exemplars for chronic disease management clinics. [173922]

Mr. Hutton: The Department is currently working with the national health service to develop a strategy to offer better services to people with chronic conditions. The role of exemplars has not yet been decided.

Mr. Frank Cook: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when his Department will publish details of his proposals on chronic disease management clinics; [174015]

(2) what funding the Government will make available for chronic disease management clinics. [174017]

Mr. Hutton: The Department is working with the national health service to develop a strategy on chronic disease, the aim of which is to help keep people with such conditions healthy. This strategy is focusing initially on providing case management, for people with complex needs, and on developing self care support to help people take control of their own conditions. It will be a decision for primary care trusts as to whether clinics are a part of their approach to delivering better care to people with chronic conditions, and, if so, what timescales and resources are attached to their development.

Mr. Frank Cook: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether his Department plans to set up chronic disease management clinics for inflammatory skin disease. [174016]

Mr. Hutton: The Department is working with the national health service to develop a strategy on chronic disease whose aim is to help keep people with such conditions healthy. This strategy is focusing initially on providing case management, for people with complex needs, and on developing self care support to help people take control of their own conditions. However, it is for primary care trusts to determine the best way to deliver services to people with skin conditions, whether through clinics or other delivery means.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what action his Department is taking to develop chronic disease management clinics; [174023]

(2) what timescale has been set for the establishment of chronic disease management clinics; [174025]

(3) what disease areas are being considered for chronic disease management clinics; and what plans he has to include dermatology as one of those disease areas. [174024]

Mr. Hutton: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Stockton, North (Mr. Cook) today.

Clinical Advisers (IT Forum)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on how many occasions the NHS IT forum of clinical advisers has met; and when it last met. [173091]

Mr. Hutton: Previous meetings of the National Clinical Advisory Board were held on:

2 October 2003

27 November 2003

15 January 2004

16 March 2004

13 May 2004.

The Department issued a press notice on 30 April 2004 to outline the plans to continue and improve engagement with patient and national health service stakeholders in order to support the implementation of the national programme for information technology (NPfIT). This follows on from the appointment of Aidan Halligan, Deputy Chief Medical Officer, as joint senior responsible owner and director general for NPfIT, who now has responsibility for leading on the preparations and planning for implementation across the NHS.

The first step has been to set up a new frontline support academy for clinicians. The formal arrangements for engaging with key groups is also being reviewed and an announcement will be made later in the summer.

Communications Consultants

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what procurement and tendering systems are used by NHS bodies in the appointment of communications consultants, with particular reference to the appointment by the Shaping Health Services Project Board of Clear Communications; [176240]

(2) what the total cost to date is to the *(a)* Thames Valley Strategic Health Authority, *(b)* Chiltern and South Bucks Primary Care Trust, *(c)* Vale of Aylesbury Primary Care Trust, *(d)* Wycombe Primary Care Trust, *(e)* Buckinghamshire Hospitals NHS Trust, *(f)* Buckinghamshire Mental Health NHS Trust and *(g)* Two Shires Ambulance Trust of employing Clear Communications as communications consultants in relation to the Shaping Health Services proposals for health service provision in Buckinghamshire; [176243]

(3) when the *(a)* Thames Valley Strategic Health Authority, *(b)* Chiltern and South Bucks Primary Care Trust, *(c)* Vale of Aylesbury Primary Care Trust, *(d)* Wycombe Primary Care Trust, *(e)* Buckinghamshire Hospitals NHS Trust, *(f)* Buckinghamshire Mental Health NHS Trust and *(g)* Two Shires Ambulance Trust agreed to accept a share in the cost of employing Clear Communications as communications consultants in relation to the Shaping Health Services proposals for health service provision in Buckinghamshire; [176241]

(4) how many NHS bodies in England and Wales are employing Clear Communications as communications consultants; [176242]

(5) what the total cost to NHS bodies in England has been of payments to Clear Communications in *(a)* 2003, *(b)* 2002 and *(c)* 2001. [176244]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* The Department does not hold this information.

Computer File Formats

Mr. Allan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his Department's policy is in respect of the computer file formats used for the *(a)* distribution and *(b)* archiving of publicly available documents. [173353]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department uses a number of file formats in addition to HTML on its website. All major publications are made available in Adobe portable document format (PDF). Other formats used include rich text format (RTF), Microsoft Word, plain text, comma separated value (CSV), Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint, audio and video file formats.

The use of the above formats depends on the specific information and the use to which it will be put. For example, statistical publications such as statistical bulletins are normally available in PDF with the associated data available as Excel spreadsheets; online forms that health and social care professionals are required to complete or wish to re-use are made available in Word and RTF; presentations are usually made available in PDF and Microsoft PowerPoint format.

In archiving electronic documents, the Department aims to preserve documents in these formats.

Dentistry

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dental practices in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly *(a)* have NHS registered patients, *(b)* are accepting new NHS patients and *(c)* have no NHS registrations. [175359]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are 92 dental practice addresses in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly for the general dental service (GDS) and personal dental service (PDS) of the national health service. 84 practice addresses have registered patients. Eight practice addresses have no registrations, of which four are for emergency only. Two are PDS practices which do not have patient registrations and one GDS practice does orthodontic work only.

The available information on practices accepting new patients is on the NHS.UK website at www.nhs.uk. There are three primary care trusts (PCTs) in the Cornwall area: Central Cornwall PCT; North and East Cornwall PCT and West of Cornwall PCT. The table shows the number of practices in each PCT accepting new patients by type of patient on 24 May.

Number of dental practices in Cornwall and Isle of Scilly accepting new NHS patients by type of patient

PCT	Registering children aged 0 to 18 years for NHS treatment	Charge paying adults	Charge exempt adults	Occasional non-registered patients
Central Cornwall	8	3	3	1
North and East Cornwall	5	2	2	—
West of Cornwall	3	2	2	3
Total	16	7	7	4

Virginia Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the availability of NHS dentistry in *(a)* South West Surrey constituency and *(b)* Surrey. [177270]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The proposals in the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003 in relation to primary dental services represent the most radical reform of national health service dentistry since 1948. They will give a better deal for patients, for dentists and for the NHS. Under these proposals, primary care trusts (PCTs) will have a duty to secure the provision of primary dental services.

Nationally, we have provided new investment totalling £90 million over the last year. £59 million will support access, and strategic health authorities (SHAs) have been advised of their shares and are working with their PCTs to address access issues. £30 million is to support information technology and the balance of £1 million will support organisational development locally.

The PCTs in Surrey are working closely with their SHA (Surrey and Sussex) supported by the shadow special health authority (dentistry) to improve local dental access using their share of the access funds: some £1.69 million in 2004–05.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have left employment in his Department because of *(a)* anxiety, *(b)* stress, *(c)* depression and *(d)* other mental health reasons in each year since 1997. [175668]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not keep a record of the number of staff who have left the Department because of anxiety, stress, depression or mental health reasons.

The Department is committed to its legal obligation to provide a safe working environment for employees and to reducing the number of working days lost to work-related injuries and illness.

Dermatology

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to include skin diseases in the Department of Health's range of recognised chronic conditions. [173925]

Mr. Hutton: The Department is working with the national health service to develop a strategy on chronic disease, the aim of which will be to help people with such conditions healthy. The strategy will not aim to give official recognition to particular conditions as being chronic, but will focus initially on providing case management for people with complex needs and on developing care support to help people take control of their own conditions.

Dietary Sodium Intake

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his policy is on levels of dietary sodium intake; and if he will make a statement. [167846]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The NHS Plan (2000) highlighted the Government's commitment to reducing the level of salt in the diet. The Government endorses the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) recommendation that reducing current salt consumption would have significant public health benefits by reducing average population blood pressure levels. The report also makes recommendations for children for the first time.

As 75 per cent. of salt in the diet is from processed foods, the Government, working with the Food Standards Agency (FSA), has made a commitment to initiatives with the food industry—including manufacturers and caterers—to improve the overall balance of diet including salt, fat and sugar in food.

In November last year, I asked industry for plans for action on reducing salt in food. The plans I received earlier this year showed that industry is taking some steps in reducing salt in food, but that there is still a long way to go. Further discussions with industry will take place to look at identifying greater year-on-year progress and ways of monitoring progress.

The FSA has also set salt targets—to reduce average salt intake by 10 per cent., or approximately 1g. per day, by 2005–06 and, in the long term, to reduce the average population intake by a third over the next five years—bringing intakes down to the recommended 6g. per day. The Department supports these targets.

Doctors' Language Tests

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what language tests are required for doctors employed by the NHS who were trained in other EU member states. [177456]

Mr. Hutton: Doctors who are nationals of European Economic Area states do not have to undertake English language tests in order to register with the General Medical Council. It is the responsibility of employers to ensure that all staff have the necessary language skills to carry out their duties safely, regardless of which country they come from.

Drug Testing

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will take steps to provide the National Institute for Clinical Excellence with additional powers to ensure negative test results by pharmaceutical companies are published; and what mechanisms are in place to ensure that health regulators assessing the safety of drugs for general release are able to make judgments based on unbiased data sets. [175780]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Regarding the National Institute for Clinical Excellence, I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave on 18 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 995W, to my hon. Friend the Member for West Bromwich, East (Mr. Watson) and the reply given on 19 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1027W, by the Under-Secretary of State for Health, the hon. Member for Welwyn Hatfield (Miss Johnson) to the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South (Mr. Hancock).

Mechanisms are in place to ensure that health regulators assessing the safety of drugs for general release are able to make judgments based on unbiased data sets. Pharmaceutical legislation specifically requires that all information which is relevant to the evaluation of the medicinal product concerned shall be included in the application, whether favourable or unfavourable to the product.

Dyspepsia

John Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment he has made of the cost of NHS prescribed medicines for dyspepsia in each year from 2000; [174346]

(2) what estimate he made of the change in NHS spending on dyspepsia arising from the National Institute for Clinical Excellence guidance published in 2000; [174347]

(3) what estimate he has made of the spending on drugs for treatment of dyspepsia as a percentage of *(a)* the total expenditure on drugs for gastro-intestinal conditions and *(b)* the total primary care drugs budget in the last year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [174348]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The net ingredient cost of drugs prescribed for the treatment of dyspepsia and dispensed in the community in England is shown in the table.

	Net ingredient cost (£000)
2000	580,277.5
2001	584,264.0
2002	621,525.6
2003	636,766.9

These figures include medicines listed in sections 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.3.1 and 1.3.5 of the British National Formulary.

The figure shown in the table for 2003 represents approximately 76 per cent. of the total expenditure on drugs for gastro-intestinal conditions, and 6.5 per cent. of the cost of all prescription items dispensed in the community.

A number of factors are believed to have influenced spending on medicines for dyspepsia. We have made no estimate of the effect of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence guidance compared with other factors.

Elderly Care Services

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many care homes for the elderly are registered as catering for people with dementia; and if he will make a statement. [175922]

Dr. Ladyman: There are currently 3,687 care homes for elderly people registered as catering for people with dementia.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the number of people aged 65 years and over who have dementia; and if he will make a statement. [175923]

Dr. Ladyman: There is no routine collection of information on the number of people living with dementia. The research quoted by the older people's national service framework in 2001 estimated that approximately 600,000 people in the United Kingdom have dementia, of whom about 583,000 are aged 65 years and above. The prevalence and incidence of dementia increases with age. It is estimated that about five per cent, of people over 65 have dementia, rising to about 20 per cent. in the population over 80. Alzheimer's disease causes up to 60 per cent. of cases of dementia.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the number of people aged 65 years or over who have learning difficulties; and if he will make a statement. [175925]

Dr. Ladyman: The White Paper, "Valuing People: A New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century" (March 2001), estimated that there were around 25,000 older people, out of a total of around 210,000 people, with severe and profound learning disabilities. In the case of people with mild/moderate learning disabilities, the White Paper stated that estimates suggest a prevalence rate of around 25 per 100,000 population (all ages)—some 1.2 million people in England.

Foundation Hospitals

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what formula has been used to decide how much of the money allocated to smooth the transition of hospitals to foundation status each Foundation Trust receives; and what amount has been given to each Foundation Trust hospital. [175452]

Mr. Hutton: National Health Service foundation trust applicants in wave one were allocated £250,000 in financial support to assist them in their preparations for their application and establishment as a NHS foundation trust. The amount was agreed through discussion with applicants. Financial support for wave one A and future waves is being agreed in a similar way.

General Practitioners

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate how many general practitioners will retire in each of the next three years; and if he will make a statement. [175688]

Mr. Hutton: The Department does not collect information on the number of general practitioners who will retire in each of the next three years.

GM Food

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) which laboratory facilities will be available to test for GM presence in the labelling of *(a)* food and *(b)* feed, as required by EU Directive 2001/18 in Regulation (EC) 1829/2003; [175569]

(2) what system has been set up to check the reliability of labelling for the presence of GM in food to meet the requirements to label set down by EU Directive 2001/18 from April; [175570]

(3) what provision he is putting in place to implement labelling of *(a)* GM animal feed and *(b)* the meat derived from animals fed on GM feed in accordance with EU Directive 2001/18 and Regulation (EC) 1829/2003. [175571]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 26 May 2004]:* Regulation (EC) 1829/2003, genetically modified (GM) food and feed lays down rules for the labelling of all GM food and feed products derived from genetically modified organisms (GMOs), regardless of the presence or absence of GM material in the final food or feed product. Products from animals fed GM animal feed are exempt from the labelling requirements. Regulation (EC) 1830/2003 on traceability and labelling of GM organisms (GMOs) provides a European Union-wide system for identifying GM products throughout the food and feed supply chain.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) and the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) are currently carrying out a joint consultation on the draft domestic legislation, which will implement these EC regulations. The consultation ends on 25 June.

Enforcement of Regulation 1829/2003 is the responsibility of local authorities. FSA officials have provided information to local authorities and met with local authority co-ordination of regulatory services officials and trading standards officers to discuss the requirements of these regulations.

There are five United Kingdom Accreditation Service accredited public analyst laboratories in the UK, which can carry out testing for GM ingredients. Testing can only be carried out where GM material (DNA or protein) is present. For products derived from GMOs, and where no GM material is present, labelling will need to be verified by a paper audit trail.

GP Registrars

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment he has made of changes in general practitioner registrar numbers and funding in London since 1997; [175262]

(2) how many doctors have entered the general practitioner vocational training scheme in the last three years. [175690]

Mr. Hutton: Information on numbers of general practitioner registrars is shown in the table.

	1997	*1999*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*Change since 1997*	*Percentage change since 1997*
London	208	221	244	282	348	140	67
England	1,343	1,520	1,883	1,980	2,235	892	66

Note: Data as at 1 October 1997–99, 30 September 2000–03.
Source:
Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics.

Funding for GP registrars is included in strategic health authorities' multi-professional education and training allocations. In 2004–05, these allocations will be increased by almost £10 million to fund £134 new GP registrars, 10 of which will be in London. We remain committed to increasing the number of GP registrars in the National Health Service and, having exceeded the NHS Plan target of 450 (later updated to 550) more GP registrars over the 1999 baseline, nine months early, work continues to recruit even more.

Haemophiliacs

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what improvements to the services available to haemophiliacs on the National Health Service have been made since 1997. [174642]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In 1998 the Government provided funding to place all haemophilia patients under 16 on synthetic clotting factors. These patients have continued to receive synthetic products as they have grown older. In February last year we announced additional funding of £88 million over three years to extend the availability of these products to adult haemophilia patients. The Government's aim is that by March 2006 the vast majority of haemophilia patients will be receiving synthetic clotting factors.

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when haemophiliacs who contracted hepatitis C through contaminated blood will receive the ex gratia payment offers from the Department of Health that he has announced. [174643]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Falkirk, East (Mr Connarty) on 4 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1464W.

Health Services (Nottinghamshire)

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS patients were waiting for *(a)* appointments and *(b)* operations in Nottinghamshire health authority areas on 1 January in each year since 1997. [173555]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is shown in the tables.

Total number of in-patients on the waiting list at 31 December for each year since 1997 for the Nottinghamshire area—in-patient provider based

NHS trust	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*
Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	5,900	6,037	5,486	4,883	4,633
Central Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	574	875	917	772	714
Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham, University Hospital NHS Trust	12,423	12,078	10,793	10,168	8,902
King's Mill Centre for Health Care Services NHS Trust	4,085	6,009	5,456	5,238	5,113
Nottingham Healthcare NHS Trust	0	94	0	0	0

	As at 31 December:		
NHS trust	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	5,283	5,657	4,786
Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham, University Hospital NHS Trust	9,556	9,981	7,492
Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust[1]	2	0	0
Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust[2]	5,942	5,424	5,417

Source:
Department of Health form KH07.

Patients waiting for a first out-patient appointment over 13 weeks as at 31 December for each year since 1997 for the Nottinghamshire area. Weeks waiting to be seen from a general practitioner referral to consultant appointment—out-patient provider based

NHS Trust	Not seen 13 to 25	26+	Total 13+
December 1996			
Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	580	207	787
Central Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	247	789	1,036
Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham, University Hospital NHS Trust	2,194	737	2,931
King's Mill Centre for Health Care Services NHS Trust	0	0	0
Nottingham Healthcare NHS Trust	160	273	433
December 1997			
Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	739	258	997
Central Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	304	133	437
Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham, University Hospital NHS Trust	5,645	5,039	10,684
King's Mill Centre for Health Care Services NHS Trust	1,847	1,133	2,980
Nottingham Healthcare NHS Trust	62	57	119
December 1998			
Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	1,172	372	1,544
Central Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	157	22	179
Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham, University Hospital NHS Trust	6,490	5,615	12,105
King's Mill Centre for Health Care Services NHS Trust	2,161	764	2,925
Nottingham Healthcare NHS Trust	6	11	17
December 1999			
Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	1,006	353	1,359
Central Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	218	6	224
Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham, University Hospital NHS Trust	4,730	4,563	9,293
King's Mill Centre for Health Care Services NHS Trust	2,193	1,167	3,360
Nottingham Healthcare NHS Trust	0	0	0
December 2000			
Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	953	344	1,297
Central Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	224	14	238
Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham, University Hospital NHS Trust	3,749	2164	5,913
King's Mill Centre for Health Care Services NHS Trust	1,504	480	1,984
Nottingham Healthcare NHS Trust	10	0	10
December 2001			
Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	1,221	173	1,394
Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham, University Hospital NHS Trust	3,153	1,058	4,211
Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust[1]	9	1	10
Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust[2]	1,999	230	2,229

Weeks

NHS Trust	Not seen 13 to less than 17	17 to less than 21	21 to less than 26	26+	Total 13+
December 2002					
Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	362	72	0	0	434
Queens Medical Centre Nottingham University Hospital NHS Trust	977	495	276	0	1,748
Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust[1]	0	0	0	0	0
Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust[2]	1,205	542	18	0	1,765
December 2003					
Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	241	5	0	0	246
Queens Medical Centre Nottingham University Hospital NHS Trust	568	179	0	0	747
Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust[1]	4	2	0	0	6
Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust[2]	842	108	0	0	950

[1] In April 2001, Nottingham Healthcare NHS Trust became Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust.

[2] In March 2001 the Central Nottinghamshire NHS Trust was abolished, and Newark Hospital from the Central Nottinghamshire NHS Trust was combined with the King's Mill Centre for Healthcare Services NHS Trust to form Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust.

Source:

Department of Health form QM08.

Health Test Charges

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate the administration costs of collecting charges for *(a)* eye check-ups, *(b)* dental check-ups and *(c)* prescriptions. [174478]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are no charges for sight tests provided under the national health service. Sight tests are free to children, older people, people on low income and those susceptible to eye disease who can benefit most from regular sight tests.

More than 85 per cent., of the total income from prescription charges is collected by community pharmacists and dispensing doctors as part of the dispensing of medicines. Charges for dental examinations are collected by dentists. There is no separately identifiable element of the remuneration of any of these professions attributable to the charge collection function.

The administration costs of the sale of prescription pre-payment certificates, which account for the remainder of the income from prescription charges, are around £1.5 million per year.

Hepatitis C

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his most recent estimate is of the number of people infected by hepatitis C. [173190]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Sutton and Cheam (Mr. Burstow) on Monday 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 192W.

ICT Training

Mr. Simon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his budget is for staff training in information and communication technology in this financial year. [173718]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not hold a corporate budget for training in information and communications technology (ICT). Individual business units will assign funds to ICT training according to business need. Programmes to implement Department-wide applications or upgrades to desktop software packages will have a funding allocation for training. In the financial year 2004–05, although there is no formal corporate budget, the Department expects to spend in the region of £250,000 on training in information and communication technology.

Intermediate Care

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many intermediate care places there were *(a)* in March 2004 and *(b)* at the 1999–2000 baseline; and if he will make a statement; [170976]

(2) how many extra intermediate care beds have been provided since the 1999–2000 baseline. [175536]

Dr. Ladyman: The data are currently being validated. The information requested will be placed in the Library as soon as the validation process is completed.

Iraq

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* doctors, *(b)* nurses, *(c)* allied health professionals and *(d)* others employed in the NHS are providing assistance in Iraq. [175217]

Mr. Hutton: The Department does not collect details centrally of the number of doctors, nurses, allied health professionals and other national health service staff providing assistance in Iraq.

In support of military commitments in Iraq, however, according to the Ministry of Defence, currently about 200 military medical reservists (a term covering doctors, nurses and allied health professionals) are deployed with the defence medical services. Many of these are likely to work in the NHS.

Lymphoedema

Ann Keen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he is taking to raise awareness amongst medical professions about methods of treating lymphoedema. [176098]

Dr. Ladyman: The content and standard of postgraduate medical training for specialist medicine is the responsibility of the United Kingdom competent authority, the Specialist Training Authority (STA). The STA takes advice from the appropriate Royal College, which appreciates the requirements presented by different conditions and develop their training curricula as appropriate. Doctors increasingly recognise that lymphoedema requires skilled management to maximise the quality of life for people with this condition.

In 2002, the National Institute for Clinical Excellence updated the Improving Outcomes in Breast Cancer guidance. The guidance makes various recommendations about lymphoedema. These include that cancer networks should agree guidelines for identifying and managing lymphoedema and that a lymphoedema service should be available for all patients who require it.

Maternity Services

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the costs to the NHS of *(a)* a Caesarean section and *(b)* a normal vaginal delivery was in the last period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [173583]

Dr. Ladyman: The costs to the national health service of caesarean sections and normal vaginal delivery are shown in the table.

£

HRG code	HRG label	National average unit cost per day case finished consultant episode (FCE)	National average unit cost per non-elective inpatient FCE	National average unit cost per elective inpatient FCE
N06	Normal delivery with complications and comorbidities	432	1,496	1,598
N07	Normal delivery without complications and comorbidities	386	817	956
N08	Assisted delivery with complications and comorbidities	307	1,768	1,664
N09	Assisted delivery without complications and comorbidities	360	1,254	1,323
N10	Caesarean section with complications and comorbidities	536	2,865	2,803
N11	Caesarean section without complications and comorbidities	439	2,062	2,113

Source:
National schedule of reference costs 2003: Appendix 1—NHS trusts own data.

The reference costs 2003 are collected from each NHS provider in England and are used to provide national average costs related to specific treatments and procedures. They have been available from 1998, although the range of services that has been included each year is iterative.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* normal vaginal, *(b)* Caesarean section and *(c)* other deliveries there were in each of the last 10 years. [173828]

Dr. Ladyman: The numbers and percentages of national health service hospital deliveries that were normal vaginal, by caesarean section and by other methods for each of the last 10 years are shown in the tables.

1. Vaginal deliveries without use of instruments[1], NHS hospitals, England, 1993–94 to 2002–03

	Estimated number of vaginal deliveries	Percentage of deliveries that were vaginal
2002–03	368,300	67.2
2001–02	361,900	66.8
2000–01	368,600	67.1
1999–2000	383,200	67.8
1998–99	400,700	69.4
1997–98	413,600	70.7
1996–97	430,400	72.4
1995–96	432,600	73.0
1994–95	444,200	73.5
1993–94	462,000	74.5

[1] Includes deliveries that were spontaneous vertex, spontaneous other, breech deliveries without instrument.

These figures can also be found in table 3 of NHS Maternity Statistics, England: 2002–03, which can be found at www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public/sb0410.htm. A copy of the bulletin is available in the Library.

2. Caesarean deliveries, NHS hospitals, England, 1993–94 to 2002–03

	Estimated numbers of caesarean deliveries	Percentage of deliveries that were by caesarean
2002–03	120,600	22.0
2001–02	119,100	22.0
2000–01	118,100	21.5
1999–2000	116,200	20.6
1998–99	110,300	19.1
1997–98	106,500	18.2
1996–97	101,100	17.0

2. Caesarean deliveries, NHS hospitals, England, 1993–94 to 2002–03

	Estimated numbers of caesarean deliveries	Percentage of deliveries that were by caesarean
1995–96	96,600	16.3
1994–95	93,700	15.5
1993–94	93,000	15.0

3. Instrumental deliveries[1], NHS hospitals, England, 1993–94 to 2002–03

	Estimated number of instrumental deliveries	Percentage of deliveries that were instrumental
2002–03	59,100	10.8
2001–02	60,700	11.2
2000–01	62,900	11.4
1999–2000	65,900	11.7
1998–99	66,500	11.5
1997–98	64,400	11.0
1996–97	64,200	10.8
1995–96	64,000	10.8
1994–95	66,500	11.0
1993–94	65,700	10.6

[1] Includes deliveries by forceps and ventouse, breech deliveries with instrument and other methods of delivery.

Medical Instruments

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much money was spent on medical instruments for use in national health service hospitals in each year since 1994; and if he will make a statement. [173578]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 19 May 2004]:* Information is only held for the years 2000–01 onwards. This is shown in the table. The figures are based on instrument sales via the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency's national contracts and reflect the increasing use of disposable single use instruments. Some National Health Service trusts buy instruments from other sources so these figures do not cover total NHS spend on medical instruments.

£

	Expenditure
2000–01	500,000
2001–02	6.1 million
2002–03	27 million
2003–04	33.3 million

Note:
All figures include Value Added Tax

Medical Staff (Blackpool, South)

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses there were in Blackpool, South in each of the last seven years. [173070]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not gathered on a constituency basis. The tables show information based on national health service organisations serving the Blackpool, South area.

The qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff and practice nurses employed by unrestricted principals and equivalents (UPEs)[1] for Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority and by organisation

As at 30 September

		Nurses						
		1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Q13	Cumbria and Lancashire SHA	13,359	13,400	13,859	13,494	13,794	15,011	15,049
Of which								
4NC42	Blackpool PCG	—	—	63	52	—	—	—
5HP	Blackpool PCT	—	—	—	—	64	284	307
5HE	Fylde PCT	—	—	—	—	28	142	155
5HF	Wyre PCT	—	—	—	—	45	224	223
QCY	North West Lancashire HA	7	7	6	10	20	—	—
Q13	Cumbria and Lancashire StHA	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
RML	Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services	845	865	871	868	910	—	—
RMR	Blackpool Victoria Hospital Trust	911	939	968	973	1,140	—	—
RXL	Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	—	1,497	1,475
RJU	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	701	746	775	772	603	—	—
RMF	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	1,272	1,234	1,264	1,256	1,330	—	—
RXN	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	—	1,915	1,928

[1] UPEs include GMS unrestricted principals, PMS contracted GPs and PMS salaried GPs.

Notes:

1. Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Hospitals NHS Trust was formed in 2002 following the merger of Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services and Blackpool Victoria Hospital Trust. Community elements of Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services formed Blackpool PCT (together with Blackpool PCG), Fylde PCT and Wyre PCT.
2. Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust was formed in 2002 following the merger of Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust and Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust.

Sources:

Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics
Department of Health Non-medical Workforce Census

Hospital, public health medicine and community health services (HCHS) Doctors[1] and general medical practitioners (excluding retainers) for Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority by organisation

As at 30 September

		All doctors[1]						
		1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Q13	Cumbria and Lancashire SHA	3,173	3,283	3,263	3,380	3,350	3,413	3,494
Of which								
4NC42	Blackpool PCG	[2]–	[2]–	82	85	[2]–	[2]–	[2]–
5HP	Blackpool PCT	[2]–	[2]–	[2]–	[2]–	84	96	101
5HE	Fylde PCT	[2]–	[2]–	[2]–	[2]–	40	38	43
5HF	Wyre PCT	[2]–	[2]–	[2]–	[2]–	69	72	73
QCY	North West Lancashire HA	8	10	8	8	5	[2]–	[2]–
Q13	Cumbria and Lancashire StHA	[2]–	[2]–	[2]–	[2]–	[2]–	10	12
RML	Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services	61	62	69	74	67	[2]–	[2]–
RMR	Blackpool Victoria Hospital Trust	258	270	286	292	303	[2]–	[2]–
RXL	Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Hospitals NHS Trust	[2]–	[2]–	[2]–	[2]–	[2]–	335	341
RJU	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	106	115	123	118	142	[2]–	[2]–
RMF	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	312	339	316	355	348	[2]–	[2]–
RXN	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	[2]–	[2]–	[2]–	[2]–	[2]–	484	482

[1] Excludes hospital medical, hospital practitioners and hospital medical clinical assistants, most of whom are GPs working part time in hospitals.
[2] Not available

Data as at 30 September every year except GP as at 1 October 1997–99

Source

Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics
Department of Health Medical and Dental Workforce Census
Department of Health Non-medical Workforce Census

Mental Health

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions his Department has had with the Department for Education and Skills in relation to the provision of child and adolescent mental health services and the Children's National Service Framework. [176057]

Dr. Ladyman: My right hon. Friend the Minister for Children and I have joint responsibility for the children's national service framework (NSF). We meet on a regular basis to discuss matters of mutual interest, such as work on the NSF.

Departmental officials with responsibility for child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) policy development meet regularly and work closely with policy colleagues within the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) to oversee the whole CAMHS development programme. Officials of both Departments are also working closely on the development of the NSF. The DfES was represented on the external working group looking at CAMHS. We will be publishing the NSF later this year.

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions his Department has had with the Home Office regarding the provision and attachment of specialist child and adolescent mental health services to *(a)* young offender institutions, *(b)* Connexions services and *(c)* youth offending teams; and if he will make a statement. [176059]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department has had no recent discussions with Home Office colleagues, nor in respect of Connexions services with colleagues in the Department for Education and Skills, on the matters raised in the question.

The Department remains committed to meeting the needs of vulnerable young people within the youth justice system. There are clear indications that the prevalence of mental health needs among young people supervised by youth offending teams (YOTs) and in custody is significantly higher than that of the general population. Departmental officials continue to work with the Youth Justice Board (YJB) on child and adolescent mental health service input into YOTs. The Department, together with the Prison Service and YJB, have jointly appointed a programme manager for juvenile health and well being. Among the benefits we expect to see is a greater understanding of the nature and prevalence of mental health disorders, which in turn will lead to primary care trusts being better able to commission services to meet the identified need.

Departmental officials are also members of the Department for Education and Skills Connexions services advisory group, where input from child and adolescent mental health services has been discussed.

The children's national service framework is scheduled to be published later this year and will point the future direction of child and adolescent mental health services, including those for this particularly vulnerable group of young people.

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people aged between 18 and 25 years are currently being treated as in-patients in psychiatric hospitals in England and Wales; and what is the average length of stay in in-patient units of psychiatric hospitals for that age group. [177515]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information is not available in the requested format.

There were 2,863 unfinished episodes where the patient was aged between 18 and 25 years and under mental illness specialities at 31 March 2003.

Mean and median lengths of stay of patients in this age group treated under mental illness specialities in 2002–03 were 114 and 20 days respectively.

Notes:

1. Figures have not yet been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).
2. Length of stay is the time from when a patient is admitted to hospital until he or she is discharged.
3. Length of stay for an unfinished episode is the time from when a patient is admitted to Hospital until 31 March in the relevant year.

Source:

Hospital episode statistics, Department of Health.

Ministerial Visits

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many journeys were made by helicopter by each Minister in his Department in each of the last 10 years; and what the journey length was in each case. [175732]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No Ministers in the Department have travelled by helicopter during the last 10 years.

MRI Scans

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether there is a measurement scale used by health authorities in comparing areas in respect of people waiting for MRI scans. [175538]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Government is committed to improving access to diagnostic services and the Department is working in partnership with strategic health authorities (SHAs) and other stakeholders to secure a more responsive service. Each SHA is responsible for developing and implementing local improvement programmes for diagnostic services and to monitor progress against any locally agreed objectives.

National Institute for Clinical Excellence

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the effectiveness and purpose of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence's Interventional Procedure Advisory Committee and the guidance it produces. [174966]

Dr. Ladyman: The purpose of the interventional procedures programme is to determine whether procedures are safe enough and work well enough for use in the National Health Service. The guidance aims to protect the safety of patients and support clinicians, healthcare organisations and the NHS as a whole in the process of introducing new procedures.

The interventional procedures programme has been producing guidance for only the past 11 months. No formal assessment of the programme has yet been made.

National Patients Safety Agency

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many staff are employed by the National Patients Safety Agency. [175936]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* During 2003–04, the National Patient Safety Agency employed approximately 124 staff.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the annual budget of the National Patients Safety Agency *(a)* was in 2003–04 and *(b)* will be in 2004–05; and if he will provide a breakdown of the expenditure in 2003–04 by budget subhead. [175938]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* The annual budget of the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) in 2003–04 was £17.25 million.

The budget for 2004–05 is £14.666 million, plus an additional proportional contribution from the National Assembly for Wales.

A breakdown of expenditure in 2003–04 are shown in the tables.

NPSA 2003–04 expenditure breakdown	*£ thousand*
Non-executive members' remuneration	89
Other salaries and wages	8,211
Supplies and services—general	142
Supplies and services—clinical	11
Establishment expenses	2,471
Transport and moveable plant	33
Premises and fixed plant	1,969
External contractors	3,569
Non cash items (capital charges)	102
Auditor's remuneration: audit fees	34
Services from other NHS bodies	463
Other miscellaneous	77
Gross revenue expenditure	17,170
Income: operating income	(323)
Net revenue expenditure	16,847
Capital expenditure	396

NPSA 2003–04 budget	*£ thousand*
Revenue resource limit	16,850
Capital resource limit	400
Total budget (resource limit)	17,250

Note:
Budget includes a proportional contribution from the National Assembly for Wales.

NHS Consultants

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many specialist full-time equivalent NHS consultants are employed to practise in each NHS acute trust, broken down by *(a)* specialty and *(b)* the number of resident population per consultant in England. [174861]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the number of whole time equivalent (wte) national health service consultants employed to practice in each NHS acute trust, broken down by specialty has been placed in the Library.

Population data by organisation is not available. Information on the number of wte consultants and population per consultant within each strategic health authority is shown in the table.

Hospital, Public Health medicine and Community Health Services (HCHS): medical and dental consultants within each strategic health authority and population per consultant [1]

England at 30 September 2003 *Whole time equivalents*

	wte	*Population per consultant* [1]
England	26,341	1,888.9
of which		
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	1,220	1,796.0
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	572	2,811.7
Essex	582	2,785.3
North West London	1,215	1,469.2
North Central London	1,214	1,001.3
North East London	829	1,854.8
South East London	1,181	1,281.7
South West London	763	1,708.5
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	1,008	1,371.3
County Durham and Tees Valley	624	1,813.5
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	651	2,498.4
West Yorkshire	1,212	1,723.2
Cumbria and Lancashire	801	2,384.6
Greater Manchester	1,544	1,628.0
Cheshire and Merseyside	1,360	1,725.2
Thames Valley	1,028	2,041.7
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	830	2,157.2
Kent and Medway	640	2,484.4
Surrey and Sussex	1,145	2,236.5
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	1,119	1,940.3
South West Peninsula	784	2,029.8
Dorset and Somerset	510	2,354.1
South Yorkshire	855	1,481.5
Trent	1,128	2,344.3
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	672	2,339.3
Shropshire and Staffordshire	638	2,339.8
Birmingham and The Black Country	1,426	1,593.0
West Midlands South	691	2,229.8
Other	101	n/a

[1] Population per consultant for England calculated using population census 2001 Based Projections for 2003. Population per consultant by SHA calculated using population census 2001 Resident Estimates for 2002
n/a = not applicable.
Source:
Department of Health medical and dental workforce census

NHS Staff

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many non-medical staff in the NHS are employed at an annual salary in excess of £100,000 a year. [175358]

Mr. Hutton: The Department does not hold this information centrally, but national health service bodies have been asked to include the information for the most senior managers in their annual accounts due for publication locally by 30 September.

NHS Surplus Land

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what NHS surplus land in England is available for new housing, broken down by hospital. [174998]

Mr. Hutton: Information is not available in the format requested. An agreement in principle has recently been reached to transfer a portfolio of sites currently in the ownership of Secretary of State for

Health, and surplus to the needs of the National Health Service, to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). Details of the use to which particular sites may be put, including for new housing, will be a matter for ODPM to establish via the normal planning process.

Orthopaedics

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the success rates of orthopaedic procedures undertaken in independent sector treatment centres compared to procedures undertaken in other settings. [174475]

Mr. Hutton: All independent sector treatment centres are subject to review of their outcomes during the life of the contracts. Activity in these new centres has only recently commenced and therefore no data is as yet available. As part of the procurement process all providers were required to demonstrate their clinical capacity and ability to obtain suitable clinicians.

Orthotics

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action is being taken to train more people in orthotics. [176520]

Mr. Hutton: The number of training places in prosthetics and orthotics has increased from 28 to 30 between 1996–97 and 2002–03 and commissioning for the allied health professions is reviewed annually.

Osteoporosis

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many osteoporosis specialist clinicians are employed in each strategic health authority. [175432]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the number of osteoporosis specialist clinicians in each strategic health authority is not available centrally.

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* osteoporotic hip fractures, *(b)* osteoporotic vertebral fractures and *(c)* osteoporotic wrist fractures occurred on average in England in each of the last three years. [175433]

Dr. Ladyman: Data is not collected centrally, as information is not available on the part of the body that is fractured.

Overseas Clinicians

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what vetting procedures are required for clinicians recruited from abroad on short-term contracts to work in independent sector treatment centres. [174477]

Mr. Hutton: All registered clinicians working in independent sector treatment centres (IS-TCs) will have undergone the following stages of vetting.

Providing companies will have exercised due diligence in their clinical appointment processes including determining qualifications and experience and suitability for the English healthcare environment. This will include English language testing.

All overseas clinicians working in IS-TCs will have been assessed and registered by the national statutory regulatory authority: doctors by the General Medical Council (GMC), nurses by the Nursing and Midwifery Council and therapists by the Health Professions Council. In addition, overseas doctors involved in surgery will have gained admission to the specialist register of the CMC through a demonstration of their "training equivalence" with United Kingdom trained doctors.

The providing company's insurance company will have carried out due diligence checks on each registered clinician before providing clinical malpractice insurance.

The national health service sponsor of the IS-TC contract will have carried out due diligence on the registration of the clinician.

The Healthcare Commission, in determining the statutory registration status of the IS-TC, will have carried out checks on all clinicians including checks of registration, occupational health checks and Criminal Records Bureau checks.

Paediatric Continence Services

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether the Children's National Service Framework will reiterate the requirement for integrated paediatric continence services; and what action he will take following the publication of the Royal College of Nursing and Continence Foundation report, "Is Policy Translated into Action"; [176048]

(2) whether he requires integrated continence services at a local level to include provision for children. [176049]

Dr. Ladyman: It is not intended that the children's national service framework will set standards for the treatment of specific conditions, but rather will outline what support should be available to children and their parents in managing a whole range of problems. In doing so, it will emphasise the promotion of evidence-based clinical guidelines, such as Good Practice in Continence Services, within which the need to include children's service provision is identified. The publication of the "Is Policy Translated into Action" document provides a helpful overview of where and how services have improved, and also the scope for further improvement, which I expect service providers will wish to consider carefully.

Parliamentary Questions

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many *(a)* Ordinary Written and *(b)* Named Day Questions his Department received in (i) 2002–03 and (ii) this parliamentary session, broken down by month; [171191]

(2) what proportion of Ordinary Written Questions to his Department were answered within five sitting days of tabling, and what proportion of questions for written answer on a named day received a substantive answer on that day, in *(a)* the 2002–03 parliamentary session and *(b)* this parliamentary session, broken down by month. [171192]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The available information is shown in the tables.

1. Ordinary written questions received by the Department during the 2002–03 session, broken down by month, with their average answering times

Month	Number received	Average time taken to answer (working days)
November 2002	438	9.9
December 2002	557	13.9
January 2003	628	9.3
February 2003	822	9.6
March 2003	617	8.6
April 2003	566	11.9
May 2003	637	11.6
June 2003	744	8.4
July 2003	[1]837	25.6
August 2003	—	—
September 2003	502	13.2
October 2003	426	9.4
November 2003	467	7.2
All months	7,241	12.0

[1] Some 50 per cent. of these questions were tabled for answer in September.

2. Named day questions received by the Department during the 2002–03 session, broken down by month, with their average answering times

Month	Number received	Average time taken to answer substantively (working days)
November 2002	221	9.1
December 2002	168	10.4
January 2003	122	7.1
February 2003	122	9.1
March 2003	116	7.1
April 2003	94	9.1
May 2003	97	8.6
June 2003	114	7.3
July 2003	85	11.1
August 2003	—	—
September 2003	76	16.7
October 2003	131	6.6
November 2003	102	4.5
All months[1]	1,448	8.8

[1] 68 per cent. of all questions were given a holding reply.

3. Ordinary written questions received by the Department during the 2003–04 session, broken down by month, with their average answering times

Month	Number received	Average time taken to answer (working days)
November 2003	174	10.9
December 2003	527	12.5
January 2004	511	8.4
February 2004	597	10.4
March 2004	796	9.7
April 2004	584	7.5
All months	3,189	9.7

4. Named day questions received by the Department during the 2003–04 session, broken down by month, with their average answering times

Month	Number received	Average time taken to answer substantively (working days)
November 2003	22	10.9
December 2003	130	9.1
January 2004	116	6.9
February 2004	110	9.2
March 2004	138	9.8
April 2004	63	6.6
All months[1]	579	8.6

[1] 63 per cent. of all questions were given a holding reply.

The Department endeavours to reply to all questions from hon. and right hon. Members in a timely, helpful and accurate manner.

Private Sector Treatment

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much money has been spent paying the private sector to treat NHS patients in *(a)* England and *(b)* the area covered by Mid Yorkshire Hospitals Trust in (i) 2001–02, (ii) 2002–03 and (iii) 2003–04. [167056]

Mr. Hutton: It is not possible to extrapolate the precise amount of money spent in the private sector for 2001–02, 2002–03, 2003–04 from the overall cost of the national health service buying services from non-NHS providers, including voluntary and charitable organisations and the independent sector.

Data was not identified separately for 2001–02. For 2002–03, the reference cost collection was separately identified. Data for 2003–04 will not be available until October 2004.

This will not equate to the total private sector costs because:

Some organisations part-pay non-NHS providers for individual elements of a service.

The data includes voluntary and charitable services purchased.

The data only relates to services that are included in the current reference cost collection, that is, approximately 80 per cent. of acute services.

Learning disabilities services, hospice care and residential and continuing care are outside the scope of the reference costs collection.

Prussian Blue

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what stocks of Prussian blue are available to the Government; and what number of people this would allow to be treated in the event of leaks from radioactive material. [174366]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* Prussian blue is effective in the treatment of people exposed to caesium-137. It is also effective in treating poisoning with non-radioactive metals, such as thallium. In view of this, the Government have ensured that sufficient stocks of Prussian blue are available for use in the event of a release of caesium-137 or thallium. For security reasons, details of what stocks are held are not disclosed.

Public Bodies

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was spent on the Dental Practice Board in the last financial year for which figures are available; how many times the Board has met; and when it last met. [175265]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The net cost of the Dental Practice Board (DPB) in the financial year 2003–04 was £23.8million. The cost is shared proportionally between the Department and the National Assembly for Wales as the DPB provides a dental payment and information service for England and Wales.

The DPB board meets four times a year and last met on 21 April 2004.

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* actual and *(b)* predicted funding of (i) community health councils, (ii) the Commission for Public Patient Involvement in Health, (iii) the Independent Complaint and Advocacy Service and (iv) patients' forums was in each year since 1997. [175271]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table. The data relating to the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health (CPPIH) and patients' forums are shown as a single amount because the there is no separate budget for patients' forums and the CPPIH is responsible for allocating funds to them. The data relating to expenditure up to 2004–05 is actual spend—figures for 2004–05 are predicted spend.

£ million

	Community health councils	*CPPIH and patients' forums*	*Independent complaints advocacy services*
1997–98	22.561	n/a	n/a
1998–99	22.561	n/a	n/a
1999–2000	23	n/a	n/a
2000–01	23	n/a	n/a
2001–02	23	n/a	n/a
2002–03	23	3.27	n/a
2003–04	15	30.192	4.4
2004–05	n/a	33.3	6.8

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many times a year the Board of the Health Development Agency is scheduled to meet; and on what dates. [175344]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Board of the Health Development Agency meets six times per year alternately in London and in regional locations. The remaining dates for 2004 are 14 July in the north-west region, 7 October in London and 1 December in the south-east region.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the relationship between the work of the National Biological Standards Board and the Health Protection Agency; and what plans he has to merge the two bodies. [175318]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The National Biological Standards Board (NBSB) and the Health Protection Agency (HPA) work closely together on areas of common interest and the Department has actively encouraged them to do so. The NBSB's executive body, the National Institute for Biological Standards and Control, also acts as the official testing and release body for some of the HPA's vaccine products. We have no plans at present to merge these two bodies.

Both bodies are part of the ongoing review of the Department's arms length bodies, which was the subject of my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State's announcement on 20 May.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the *(a)* Administration of Radioactive Substances Advisory Committee and *(b)* the Advisory Board on Registration of Homoeopathic Products last met. [175319]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The administration of adioactive substances advisory committee last met on 21 January 2004.

The advisory board on registration of homeopathic medicines last met on 23 March 2004.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how often the Committees on *(a)* medical aspects of radiation in the environment, *(b)* the safety of devices, *(c)* the safety of medicines and *(d)* carcinogenicity of chemicals in food, consumer products and the environment are scheduled to convene; and on what date each last met. [175338]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Committee on Medical Aspects of Radiation in the Environment (COMARE) currently meets four times a year. It last met on 18 March 2004.

The Committee on the Safety of Devices was set up in April 2001 and meets up to three times a year. The last meeting was held on 20 November 2003.

The Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM) meets twice a month and once in December. No meetings are held in August. The CSM last met on 5 May 2004.

The Committee on Carcinogenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COC) meets three times a year. The COC last met on 1 April 2004.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how often the Advisory Committees on *(a)* dangerous pathogens, *(b)* distinction awards, *(c)* hepatitis and *(d)* borderline substances are scheduled to convene; and on what date each last met. [175340]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Meetings of the Advisory Committee on Dangerous Pathogens are convened quarterly; the last meeting was on 22 March 2004. The last meeting of the Advisory Committee on distinction awards was on 7 October 2003. It has since been succeeded by the Advisory Committee on Clinical Excellence Awards, which convenes annually. Meetings of the Advisory Committee on Hepatitis are convened two to three times per year; the last meeting was on 18 February 2004. Meetings of the Advisory Committee on Borderline Substances are convened three times a year; the last meeting was on 23 March 2004.

Royal Liverpool Children's Litigation

Mrs. Ellman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what arrangements the NHS Litigation Authority has made concerning the Royal Liverpool children's litigation; and how the implementation of these arrangements is being monitored. [177275]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The National Health Service Litigation Authority agreed settlement terms for the Royal Liverpool children's litigation (RLCL) in a mediation, which took place in September 2002. Lump sum compensation of £5 million was made to a trust fund set up by the RLCL claimants. The payment was approved by the court.

The Royal Liverpool NHS Trust has completed all but one of the terms of the settlement that were agreed with the claimants at the mediation. The parents were unable to reach a consensus on the type of memorial to be developed, and have therefore agreed among them that the £5,000 should be donated to five children's charities. This final action is being taken forward.

A review meeting at the trust, attended by claimants, took place on 29 January 2004 to confirm implementation of the mediation agreement.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases of sexually transmitted diseases were reported for those between 11 and 19 in each year since 2000 in the Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Avon Strategic Health Authority, broken down by age. [176123]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave to my hon. Friends the Members for Workington (Tony Cunningham) and Heywood and Middleton (Jim Dobbin) on 25 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1610–11W.

Skin Clinics

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what he is doing to encourage the development of skin clinics in primary care comparable to those provided for asthma and diabetes. [173923]

Mr. Hutton: Primary care trusts, in partnership with local stakeholders, have the responsibility for deciding what services to provide for their populations, including those with skin disease. They are best placed to understand local health needs and commission services to meet them.

Speech and Language Therapists

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will set out his proposals for future terms and conditions for speech and language therapists in the NHS; and if he will make a statement. [176517]

Mr. Hutton: The terms and conditions of service for all staff covered by "Agenda for Change", including speech and language therapists are set out in the proposed agreement published in March 2003, which is also available on the Department's website.

The new system will deliver fair and equitable conditions of service across all groups covered by "Agenda for Change" by harmonising core conditions of service, such as hours and annual leave. In addition, speech and language therapists will have access to payments for working unsocial hours and overtime.

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate the numbers of speech and language therapists requiring pay protection from April 2005; and if he will make a statement. [176518]

Mr. Hutton: We are currently testing the impact of the whole package of pay reform including the numbers of staff requiring protection, in 12 early implementer sites. The United Kingdom health departments and national health service unions and employer representatives are now reviewing the emerging evidence from the sites and the conclusions from this review are likely to be known in July. The agreed success criterion is that, overall no more than a small percentage of staff should require formal protection. The proposed agreement also includes provision to ensure that for any staff requiring protection, there will be a review during this period of protection, to explore whether the staff concerned could be reassigned to a higher weighted job or offered development and training to fit them for a higher weighted job.

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the proposals for working hours for speech and language therapists; and how these will be reflected in earnings. [176519]

Mr. Hutton: The proposed agreement aims to harmonise the disparate hours of the different staff groups by providing a standardised working week of 37.5 hours for all full-time national health service staff covered by "Agenda for Change" with phased protection arrangements for staff who currently work shorter hours for a period of up to eight years. Nationally speech and language therapists work unconditioned hours and may be working either above or below the proposed hours under the new arrangements.

These arrangements support the underlying principles of "Agenda for Change" of ensuring a fair, transparent pay system, based on the important principle of equal pay for work of equal value with simplified consistent conditions of service fairly applied across all staff groups.

St. George's Hospital

Martin Linton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many beds are available for each specialist service at St. George's Hospital. [175876]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is not collected centrally. Information on the number of beds broken down by ward classification is published and is available at http://www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity.

Staff Redundancies

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many staff have been made redundant as a consequence of his Department's Change Programme. [175698]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 25 May 2004]*: There have been 101 redundancies so far as the result of the change programme, and all these were voluntary.

Strategic Health Authorities

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether representatives of strategic health authorities are permitted to cast votes on special committees set up to make recommendations on health service matters to the same strategic health authorities which provided the representatives to the special committees; and if he will make a statement. [175699]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 24 May 2004]*: Yes. Paragraph 14(1) of the Health Authorities Membership and Procedure Regulations 1996 provides that

> "Subject to such directions as may be given by the Secretary of State, an Authority may, and if directed by him, shall appoint committees of the Authority, or together with one or more other Authorities appoint joint committees consisting, in either case, wholly or partly of the chairman and members of the Authority or Authorities or wholly of persons who are not members of the Authority or Authorities in question."

Decisions on voting prior to making any recommendations are a matter for the members of the committee.

Student Nurses

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the adequacy of clinical placements for student nurses. [175316]

Mr. Hutton: The work force directorates of strategic health authorities (SHAs) commission nurse training places from higher education institutions (HEIs). They are jointly responsible for the adequacy of student placements they provide.

The recent increase in the number of nurses in training has led to some pressure on clinical placements. Work is therefore under way to improve the range and quality of practice placements. SHAs and HEIs are actively engaged with local employers in expanding the opportunities available for students.

Sucraid

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will make a statement on National Institute for Clinical Excellence guidelines on the prescription of sucraid in the treatment of congenital sucrase isomaltese deficiency; [174969]

(2) he will list the hospitals where sucraid has been prescribed in the last five years. [174970]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The National Institute for Clinical Excellence has not issued guidelines on the prescription of sucraid. Data on prescriptions for sucraid in hospitals are not collected centrally.

Unique Identity Numbers

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when NHS patients will be assigned unique identity numbers for IT purposes. [176879]

Mr. Hutton: All existing national health service patients have already been assigned a unique identifier. NHS patients are assigned unique identity numbers either at birth (for children born in the United Kingdom) or when they register for NHS services. The number is used to enable different NHS organisations involved with the delivery of care to share information reliably. It is used in NHS information technology systems for this purpose.

United Healthcare Group

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment has been made of the savings to the NHS in the primary care trusts that have piloted the Evercare model of service provision; [175808]

(2) what evaluation has been made of the *(a)* costs and *(b)* benefits to the national health service of the Evercare pilot programmes provided by the United Healthcare Group. [175813]

Mr. Hutton: The pilot schemes are being independently evaluated by the National Primary Care Research and Development Centre.

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will place in the Library *(a)* contracts or agreements that the national health service has entered into with the United Healthcare Group and *(b)* monitoring and evaluation reports in respect of these contracts or agreements; [175809]

(2) if he will list the agreements or contracts that have been entered into with the United Healthcare Group for providing consultancy, health care or other services to the national health service. [175810]

Mr. Hutton: Ten primary care trusts (PCTs) have entered contracts with United Health Group for support in implementing the group's care model locally. The Department does not hold copies of those contracts. Nor does the Department hold lists of contracts placed by national health service bodies with particular companies. I have however placed in the Library UnitedHealth Group's interim report on implementation of its care model in the pilot PCTs.

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what contacts at official level there have been between his Department and United Healthcare Group since October 2003. [175811]

Mr. Hutton: Departmental officials have met representatives of UnitedHealth Group within the steering group established to oversee the piloting by primary care trusts of the group's care model. UnitedHealth Group has also participated in events organised by the Department's Modernisation Agency to help support better management of chronic conditions.

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many civil servants in his Department have left their posts in order to take up employment with the United Healthcare Group in the past two years. [175812]

Mr. Hutton: No civil servants have left posts in the Department to take up employment with UnitedHealth Group in the past two years.

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much money the National Health Service has paid to the United Healthcare Group in respect of *(a)* the Evercare pilot programmes and *(b)* other services provided by the United Healthcare Group. [175814]

Mr. Hutton: £3.7 million was allocated by the Department in 2003–04 to primary care trusts (PCTs) towards the costs of their individual agreements with UnitedHealth Group. The actual costs of each contract are a matter for each PCT.

Waiting Lists/Times

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health in how many cases patients waiting longer than six months for a NHS operation were removed from the list on the grounds that they are not fit, willing or able to attend for surgery in the latest year for which figures are available. [175691]

Mr. Hutton: Data on removals are published on the Department's website at www.performance.doh.gov.uk/waitingtimes.

The data do not identify the length of wait of patients removed from the list.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting times were for a routine scan in each year since 1997; and what procedures are included in his definition of a routine scan. [174585]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data on waiting times for magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) is not collected centrally.

The word 'routine' is describing the urgency with which the scan referral should be acted upon and this is affected by such things as the severity of the patients symptoms, the likely diagnosis and the speed at which treatment for that condition should be started to optimise the best chance of a good outcome.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes there have been to NHS waiting list times for the residents of Wirral, South in each of the last seven years. [172687]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

Inpatient waiting lists by Commissioner for the Wirral Area (1996–2004)—Waiting list in months

	Wirral health authority						Bebington and West Wirral PCT	
	1996–97	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Total	6,354	6,661	5,489	4,890	4,887	5,705	1,841	1,657
0 to 2 not seen	3,634	4,047	3,466	2,677	3,014	3,294	1,061	1,165
3 to 5 not seen	1,469	1,553	1101	1,066	1,072	1,282	428	381
6 to 8 not seen	726	670	529	576	472	665	263	111
9 to 11 not seen	412	337	291	311	201	394	89	0
12 to 14 not seen	97	46	79	197	89	70	0	0
15 to 17 not seen	15	8	23	63	39	0	0	0
18 to 20 not seen	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
21 to 23 not seen	1	0	0	0	0	0	—	—

Source:
Department of Health QF01

Outpatient waiting lists by Commissioner for the Wirral Area (1997–2002)—GP referral to consultant waiting list in weeks

	Wirral health authority				
	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*
Not seen 13 to 25	1,443	1,781	4,130	1,644	1,684
Not seen 26 plus	654	1,351	3,261	2,464	1

Outpatient waiting lists by Commissioner for the Wirral Area (2002–2004)—GP referral to consultant waiting list in weeks

	Bebington and West Wirral PCT	
	2002–03	*2003–04*
Not seen 13 to 17	204	117
Not seen 17 to 21	137	2
Not seen 21 to 26	0	0
Not seen 26 +	0	0

Source:
Department of Health QM08R

Work-related Stress

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the annual cost to the NHS of *(a)* work-related stress and *(b)* accidents at work. [174657]

Miss Melanie Johnson: It is not possible to estimate in either case on the basis of the available data.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Fines

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to link the level of fines to a convicted individual's income. [173120]

Paul Goggins: Fines are currently imposed on the basis of the seriousness of the offence and the offender's ability to pay. The Carter Review, "Managing Offender, Reducing Crime", recommended the introduction of a 'day fines' system, which would offer a transparent link with the ability to pay. The Government is currently considering this proposal, which would require primary legislation.

UK Citizens (Marriage)

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his policy to record the English language proficiency of spouses who have been given entry clearance to come to the UK; and if he will make a statement. [176280]

Mr. Mullin: I have been asked to reply.

UKvisas do not record the English language proficiency of spouses as part of the visa application process. There is no policy or requirement in the UK Immigration Rules for spouse's proficiency in English to be recorded. The Home Office is responsible for the contents of the Immigration Rules, and have no plans to introduce language proficiency as a prerequisite of granting entry clearance to spouses.

Alcohol Reduction Strategy

Mr. Bailey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of a timetable for implementing the alcohol reduction strategy. [171749]

Ms Blears: We have already begun to implement the Alcohol Harm Strategy for England. Home Office officials are working with officials at the Department of Health and others across Government to make sure that it is implemented on time.

We will be measuring progress regularly against clearly defined indicators, and there will be an independent review early in the next Parliament to assess whether enough progress has been made on working with the industry to develop a voluntary social responsibility scheme.

Army Personnel

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many investigations have been conducted by the North Yorkshire police in each of the last five years into *(a)* deaths and *(b)* violent incidents (i) at army barracks and (ii) involving military personnel associated with Catterick Barracks; and how many of these resulted in papers being sent to the Crown Prosecution Service. [176043]

Ms Blears: In the last five years, North Yorkshire Police, on behalf of Her Majesty's Coroner, have been involved in the investigation of eight separate sudden deaths of military personnel at Catterick Garrison. The deaths occurred in 1999 (two sudden deaths), 2000 (two sudden deaths), 2001 (one sudden death), 2002 (two sudden deaths) and 2003 (one sudden death). None of these investigations were referred to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS).

In the same period, North Yorkshire Police have been involved in dealing with three violent incidents at Catterick Garrison that involved military personnel, of which one resulted in papers being submitted to the CPS. The incidents took place in 2000, 2002 and 2003.

To obtain the same information for the other army bases that are covered by North Yorkshire Police could be done only at a disproportionate cost.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average response time of the North Yorkshire Police has been to incidents at Catterick Barracks in the last three years; and what rules govern the relations of civilian and military investigators. [176044]

Ms Blears: North Yorkshire Police advised that it would be improper to release figures for the Catterick Garrison area due to the sensitive nature of the garrison and potential terrorist threat. North Yorkshire Police, however, advised that they have an urban response time target of 15 minutes. For August 2002, their average urban response time was 9.4 minutes, for 2003–04 it was 16 minutes and for 2004 to date their average is 8.23 minutes. Their rural response target is 20 minutes and for the respective periods the average response times are 15.25 minutes, 15.5 minutes and 13.53 minutes.

The position under legislation is that both the civilian and military police in England and Wales are governed by the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) and its Codes of Practice. Section 113 of the Act provides that:

> ". . . any provision of the Act which relates to investigations of offences conducted by police officers or to persons detained by the police shall apply, subject to such modifications as [the Secretary of State] may specify, to investigations of offences conducted under the Army Act 1957 . . ."

The rules which govern the relations of civilian and military investigators, are set out in:

"Protocol between the Ministry of Defence police and Home Office police forces", Home Office Circular 17/1999

"Army Land Standing Order 3203"

"Defence Council Instruction document of April 2003: The Reporting and Investigation of Criminal and other Disciplinary Offences in the Ministry Of Defence, Armed Forces and Defence estate in the UK"

"The Defence Policing Protocol", which outlines the protocol between the defence police forces.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the legal basis is of Association of Chief Police Officers guidelines on the investigation of deaths on Army property; and if he will place a copy of the guidelines in the Library. [176045]

Ms Blears: At present, there are no Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) guidelines on the investigation of deaths on military property. An ACPO working party to look into deaths on military establishments has, however, been established.

ACPO guidelines have no statutory basis; they are guidelines for the Police Service.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in what circumstances military authorities in the United Kingdom may deny police officers acting in performance of their duties access to Army premises. [176046]

Ms Blears: There are no circumstances where military authorities may deny police officers who are acting in performance of their duty access to Army premises. If a police officer knows or has good reason to believe that a serious crime is being committed on army premises, he or she is entitled under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 to enter such premises with or without a warrant. The Military Police, who provide law

enforcement on army premises, have a good working relationship with the civilian police. The Military Police would investigate and deal with any of the less serious infringements of the law occurring on army bases, but would expect the civilian police to deal with any serious crime committed there.

Arson

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many convictions there were in each of the last three years for arson; and how many of these convictions were of repeat offenders; [171435]

(2) what the average sentence for arson was in each of the last three years. [171434]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* 1,500 people were found guilty of arson in England and Wales in 2001 and 1,493 in 2002.

Of those found guilty of arson in 2001, 15 per cent. had a previous conviction for arson, the equivalent figure for 2002 was 10 per cent.[1]

The average custodial sentence length imposed for arson in 2001 was 28.5 months and in 2002, 27.9 months.

Statistics for 2003 will be published in the Autumn.

[1] Sentencing samples are based on four weeks of data, one week for each quarter of the year.

Case Review Process

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what issues the Criminal Cases Review Commission scrutinises during the case review process. [170471]

Paul Goggins: It is the Commission's usual practice to obtain the summing up in cases involving a review of conviction, where this is available, and to review the terms in which the judge has directed the jury on all matters of law, including the burden and standard of proof.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions in the last two years documents necessary for the review of a case have been destroyed between application to the Criminal Cases Review Commission and review. [170472]

Paul Goggins: The Commission does not have precise data on this question and the resources to acquire it would be disproportionate.

However, the Commission has established procedures which ensure that all necessary material is preserved at the earliest point in the case review process. This is particularly relevant for older convictions where established policies in public bodies may indicate early destruction.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether retractions in interviews regarding sex abuse case reviews are always documented in the Statement of Reasons by the Criminal Cases Review Commission. [170473]

Paul Goggins: The Commission's guidance is that where retractions are reported, the consideration given to them should be set out in the Statement of Reasons.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the Criminal Cases Review Commission ensures that all case review managers working on sex abuse cases are aware of all the relevant publications and materials available in the Commission. [170474]

Paul Goggins: The Commission operates a system of regular briefings for all staff and a recent extended briefing was devoted to this topic. Having Commission members serving as decision makers and one as an assigned Commission member in each case review ensures that relevant material is considered. The Commission maintains a library of material available to all staff and its IT system enables the interrogation of all Commission material from the desktop.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether Case Review Managers working on sex abuse cases are given a checklist of issues which may assist in their review. [170475]

Paul Goggins: Following an internal review, the Commission recommended that a checklist of factors and investigatory techniques should be to assist those who review sexual abuse cases. This has been addressed and a supporting document is being developed.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if the Criminal Cases Review Commission will seek reports from psychologists to identify research, good practice and guidance on the application of scientific methodology to the investigation of contemporary and historical allegations of sex abuse. [170477]

Paul Goggins: The Commission has received such a report and has no plans at present to seek further reports.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions visiting speakers have addressed the Criminal Cases Review Commission on awareness of the issues and investigative techniques in sexual abuse cases over the last two years. [170478]

Paul Goggins: Visiting speakers have addressed the Commission on six occasions in the last 12 months on a variety of topics. Many of these have touched directly or indirectly on the issues surrounding sexual abuse cases.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the Criminal Cases Review Commission's use of exceptional circumstances to allow referrals where a previous appeal has not been heard. [170479]

Paul Goggins: Where there has been no appeal, the Commission will consider whether exceptional circumstances apply. The Commission has referred cases where exceptional circumstances have applied, the most usual example being where one co-defendant has appealed and another has not.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when a decision will be made regarding the extension of the Criminal Cases Review Commission's section 17 powers. [170515]

Paul Goggins: We are considering a number of proposals from the Criminal Cases Review Commission, including one which would require an extension of the Commission's powers under section 17 of the Criminal Appeal Act 1995. The subject matter of this proposal is the disclosure of material by third parties for the purpose of criminal cases, and as such it is related to Lord Justice Auld's recommendation (206) which urges consideration of a new statutory third party disclosure scheme. We therefore intend to deal with the two matters together. These are complex issues and I am unable at this time to indicate when we will have completed our deliberations.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the work and findings of the Criminal Cases Review Commission's collaboration with the Historical Abuse Appeal Panel. [170516]

Paul Goggins: The Criminal Cases Review Commission is in regular dialogue with the Historical Abuse Appeal Panel. Such liaison and exchange of information as will assist the Commission in its work will continue.

CCTV

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much public funding has been spent on CCTV security cameras in *(a)* Haltemprice and Howden and *(b)* the East Riding of Yorkshire in the last five years. [176067]

Ms Blears: In the last five years, the Home Office has provided £381,558 to the East Riding of Yorkshire (which includes the constituency of Haltemprice and Howden) for CCTV schemes.

Allocation of that funding is a matter for the East Riding of Yorkshire Council and Humberside Constabulary. The information is not held centrally.

Compensation Scheme (Remand Prisoners)

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will assess the compensation scheme for people remanded in custody and subsequently found not guilty which operates in New Zealand. [171109]

Paul Goggins: I have no plans to make an assessment of the scheme operating in New Zealand for compensating those remanded in custody and subsequently found not guilty.

The current schemes for compensating those wrongfully convicted or charged in England and Wales are provided for in Section 133 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 and under the ex-gratia arrangements announced in the then Home Secretary's statement of 29 November 1985. The latter specifically provides compensation for those acquitted after having been held in custody on remand following a charge that has subsequently been found to be wrongfully brought.

Computer Misuse

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions under the Misuse of Computers Act 1990 were *(a)* initiated and *(b)* discontinued in each region in each of the last 10 years. [172426]

Paul Goggins: The requested information is contained in the table.

Statistics on court proceedings for 2003 will be published in the autumn.

Number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts and those where the proceedings were discontinued etc. for offences under the Computer Misuse Act 1990[1], by region, England and Wales 1993 to 2002

	Section 1[2]		Section 2[2]		Section 3[2]	
Year/region	*Proceeded against*	*Discontinued[3]*	*Proceeded against*	*Discontinued[3]*	*Proceeded against*	*Discontinued[3]*
1993						
North East	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
North West	n/a	n/a	1	1	1	—
Yorkshire and Humberside	n/a	n/a	—	—	2	—
East Midlands	n/a	n/a	—	—	1	—
West Midlands	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
East	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
London	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
South East	n/a	n/a	—	—	1	—
South West	n/a	n/a	—	—	2	2
Wales	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
England and Wales	n/a	n/a	1	1	7	2
1994						
North East	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
North West	n/a	n/a	—	—	1	—
Yorkshire and Humberside	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
East Midlands	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
West Midlands	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
East	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
London	n/a	n/a	—	—	1	1
South East	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
South West	n/a	n/a	—	—	1	—
Wales	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
England and Wales	n/a	n/a	—	—	3	1

Number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts and those where the proceedings were discontinued etc. for offences under the Computer Misuse Act 1990[1], by region, England and Wales 1993 to 2002

	Section 1[2]		Section 2[2]		Section 3[2]	
Year/region	*Proceeded against*	*Discontinued[3]*	*Proceeded against*	*Discontinued[3]*	*Proceeded against*	*Discontinued[3]*
1995						
North East	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
North West	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
Yorkshire and Humberside	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
East Midlands	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
West Midlands	n/a	n/a	—	—	1	—
East	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
London	n/a	n/a	—	—	2	—
South East	n/a	n/a	—	—	2	—
South West	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
Wales	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
England and Wales	n/a	n/a	—	—	5	—
1996						
North East	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
North West	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
Yorkshire and Humberside	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
East Midlands	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
West Midlands	n/a	n/a	—	—	1	1
East	n/a	n/a	1	1	—	—
London	n/a	n/a	1	—	—	—
South East	n/a	n/a	—	—	1	—
South West	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
Wales	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
England and Wales	n/a	n/a	2	1	2	1
1997						
North East	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
North West	n/a	n/a	—	—	1	—
Yorkshire and Humberside	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
East Midlands	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
West Midlands	n/a	n/a	—	—	1	—
East	n/a	n/a	—	—	5	—
London	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
South East	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
South West	n/a	n/a	—	—	7	—
Wales	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
England and Wales	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
1998						
North East	—	—	—	—	—	—
North West	—	—	—	—	1	—
Yorkshire and Humberside	1	—	—	—	—	—
East Midlands	1	—	—	—	—	—
West Midlands	—	—	3	—	1	1
East	1	1	—	—	—	—
London	—	—	—	—	1	—
South East	3	2	—	—	—	—
South West	—	—	—	—	1	—
Wales	—	—	3	—	—	—
England and Wales	6	3	6	—	4	1
1999						
North East	—	—	—	—	—	—
North West	—	—	1	—	1	1
Yorkshire and Humberside	—	—	—	—	—	—
East Midlands	1	1	—	—	1	—
West Midlands	1	—	—	—	—	—
East	—	—	—	—	—	—
London	—	—	—	—	2	—
South East	3	2	—	—	—	—
South West	—	—	—	—	—	—
Wales	1	1	2	—	4	1
England and Wales	6	4	3	—		
2000						
North East	1	—	—	—	—	—
North West	1	—	—	—	—	—
Yorkshire and Humberside	2	—	—	—	—	—

Number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts and those where the proceedings were discontinued etc. for offences under the Computer Misuse Act 1990[1], by region, England and Wales 1993 to 2002

	Section 1[2]		Section 2[2]		Section 3[2]	
Year/region	*Proceeded against*	*Discontinued[3]*	*Proceeded against*	*Discontinued[3]*	*Proceeded against*	*Discontinued[3]*
East Midlands	—	—	—	—	1	—
West Midlands	1	—	—	—	1	1
East	—	—	1	—	1	1
London	2	—	2	1	2	—
South East	—	—	—	—	1	—
South West	—	—	—	—	1	—
Wales	1	1	—	—	1	1
England and Wales	8	1	3	1	8	3
2001						
North East	—	—	—	—	—	—
North West	—	—	—	—	3	—
Yorkshire and Humberside	—	—	—	—	7	—
East Midlands	—	—	—	—	1	—
West Midlands	1	—	1	—	—	—
East	1	—	—	—	—	—
London	1	—	2	—	1	—
South East	1	—	1	1	—	—
South West	1	—	—	—	—	—
Wales	4	1	—	—	—	—
England and Wales	9	1	4	1	12	—
2002						
North East	—	—	—	—	—	—
North West	—	—	1	—	1	1
Yorkshire and Humberside	—	—	—	—	—	—
East Midlands	2	2	1	1	1	—
West Midlands	—	—	1	—	1	1
East	—	—	—	—	—	—
London	—	—	—	—	4	—
South East	—	—	1	—	1	—
South West	2	—	2	—	—	—
Wales	—	—	—	—	—	—
England and Wales	4	2	6	1	8	2

n/a = not available.
[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.
[2] Sections of the Computer Misuse Act 1990 are as follows:
Section 1—Unauthorised access to computer material
Section 2—Unauthorised access with intent to commit or facilitate commission of further offences
Section 3—Unauthorised modification of computer material
[3] Also includes cases where no evidence was offered or charges withdrawn, and cases discharged under Section 6 MCA 1980.

Corporate Manslaughter

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to publish the draft Bill on corporate manslaughter; and if he will make a statement on the reasons for the delay in its publication. [173565]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* The Government remain firmly committed to reforming the law on corporate manslaughter. This involves complex questions that need to be resolved before we can publish proposals.

Our aim is to publish a draft Bill before the end of the current session.

Correspondence

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the hon. Member for West Worcestershire will receive a response to his letter of 2 March, reference PO3414/4. [174747]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 20 May 2004]:* My hon. Friend the Member for Slough (Fiona Mactaggart) wrote to the hon. Member on 27 May.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to reply to the letter to him from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 14 April with regard to Muhammad Rafique. [177026]

Mr. Blunkett: I wrote to my right hon. Friend on 27 May 2004.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, North will receive a reply to his letter dated 17 February 2004 concerning Mrs. Daod Armouh. [176083]

Mr. Browne: I replied to my hon. Friend on 27 May 2004.

Crime (Public Transport)

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many *(a)* arrests and *(b)* convictions have followed from crimes committed on buses in each year since 1997; [175457]

(2) how many convictions resulted from crimes committed on London Underground in each year since 1997. [175460]

Paul Goggins: The information collected centrally on arrests and court proceedings does not identify the location of where an offence took place, as the circumstances of individual offences are not collected.

Detention Centres

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* male and *(b)* female young offenders were held in detention centres in England and Wales on 1 May 2004. [173537]

Paul Goggins: The number of sentenced young people in Prison Service establishments, secure training centres and local authority secure children's homes at the 31 March 2004 is given in the table.

Sentenced young people at 31st March 2004

	Prison Service establishments	*Secure training centres*	*Local authority secure children's homes*
Males			
Under 18	1,827	94	185
18–20[1]	6,270	0	0
Females			
Under 18	39	50	41
18–20[1]	334	0	0

[1] Includes 21-year-olds who were aged 20 or under at conviction who have not been reclassified as part of the adult population.

Evidence Production

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance his Department issues to the police to ensure that evidence is provided to the prosecution in time for trial. [170564]

Paul Goggins: The Home Office publishes the "Manual of Guidance for the preparation, processing and submission of prosecution files". The manual is updated on a continual basis by the Manual of Guidance Editorial Board, comprising members of the Association of Chief Police Officers, the Crown Prosecution Service, (CPS) Home Office, the Cabinet Office and operational members of the prosecution team. The manual mandates how prosecution files are to be prepared and provided from the police to the CPS and takes into account at each revision any changes to legislation, policy or operational procedures.

The manual does not stipulate mandatory time scales within which the police must provide evidence to the prosecution, although the quality and timeliness of prosecution files is inherent to the processes outlined in the guidance.

Firearms

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate his Department has made of the number of authorised firearms officers available to police services in England and Wales. [176269]

Caroline Flint: The latest published statistics, which relate to 2002–03, show that there were 5,763 authorised firearms officers.

Forensic Computing Skills

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the availability of forensic computing skills in law enforcement. [176694]

Ms Blears: Each police force in England and Wales has a minimum of one data recovery officer and one network investigating officer. In addition the National Hi-Tech Centre have their own data recovery unit, with approximately 56 officers. The National Technical Assistance Centre (NTAC) provide specialist technical support to the UK law enforcement community in respect of encrypted data.

Her Majesty's Customs and Excise maintain two units, one for investigations and the Computer Audit Unit for VAT investigations.

A number of other agencies including, Inland Revenue, Ministry of Defence, Royal Mail PID, Royal Air Force, British Transport Police, the Forensic Science Service (FSS) and Trading Standards have their own capabilities.

ICT

Mr. Simon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his budget is for staff training in information and communication technology in this financial year. [173712]

Mr. Blunkett: The Home Office and its agencies (excluding non-departmental public bodies) have a total budget of £3,173,608 for staff training in information and communication technology in the financial year for 2004–05. This figure excludes the Prison Service as they have no IT specific budget allocated for training.

IT Equipment

Mr. Flight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how often his Department and its agencies undergo portable appliance testing of IT equipment; and what the cost was in each of the last five years. [175711]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 26 May 2004]:* Under the IT 2000 Services Agreement the core-Home Office obtains a full range of IT services from Fujitsu Alcedo Ltd (operating as 'Sirius'). Similarly, each of the Department's agencies have an agreement with their IT service providers. Under the terms of these Agreements, all of the IT equipment used to provide these services to the Home Office and its agencies is supported and maintained by the various IT service suppliers.

As an example, the IT 2000 Agreement obliges Sirius to advise the Home Office on the frequency of electrical safety testing of portable IT equipment. Sirius's advice is that visual inspection at the time of first installation, reassessment via visual inspection at three year intervals and "combined inspection and test" (i.e. PAT testing) at five year intervals provides the appropriate assurance. However, Sirius are committed to a programme of Technology Refresh leading to the replacement of their equipment before it is five years old. On this basis, formal PAT testing of Sirius's equipment is not required and no formal programme of PAT testing for IT equipment has been conducted since the IT 2000 Agreement was signed.

Any equipment not covered by the various IT Agreements is tested under the agreements held with the various Facility Management (FM) companies responsible for the maintenance of each of the buildings concerned. However, the FM companies are responsible for all electrical equipment not covered by the IT Service Agreements and so it is impossible to separate the IT equipment from the general office equipment.

Additionally and in conjunction with the initiative to relocate the Home Office's London headquarters to 2 Marsham Street, items of IT equipment that are outside the scope of the IT 2000 Agreement are currently being identified so that they can be moved, or disposed of, appropriately. The Home Office will take this opportunity to ensure that the inspection and testing of these items is suitably up to date.

Juvenile Prisoners

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what training in *(a)* child protection and *(b)* child development is given to governors of juvenile prisons; and which governors of juvenile prisons have qualifications in childcare. [172351]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 11 May 2004]*: Appropriate Child protection training has been developed specifically for staff working with juveniles. A child protection 'train the trainer' course was rolled out across the juvenile estate in 2002, and since then all staff have had access to child protection training.

More recently, the Prison Service and the Youth Justice Board have worked together to develop and deliver appropriate training for all staff working with juveniles. The new Juvenile Awareness Staff Programme (JASP) will be mandatory for new staff, and will be made available to existing staff as part of a rolling three year programme. JASP includes child protection training as well as training in the nature of adolescence.

Data on qualifications held by Governors is not collected centrally, and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when a separate system for transporting juvenile prisoners will be established. [172353]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 11 May 2004]*: Escort services are provided by private companies under contract to the Youth Justice Board (for those sent to secure training centres or local authority secure children's homes (LASCHs)) and the Prison Service (for those sent to Young Offender Institutions).

The secure training centre/LASCH escort service is exclusively for juveniles and is managed by Group 4 (Rebound) Security Services.

New transport arrangements for journeys to and from young offender institutions will come into effect with new Prison Escort Custody Service (PECS) contracts on 29 August 2004. Where cellular vehicles are used, juveniles will not be carried in the same vehicle as adult prisoners.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many incidents of self-injury and attempted suicide by juveniles have occurred in the segregation unit at Stoke Heath. [172355]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 11 May 2004]*: There were seven reported incidents of self-harm in the Segregation Unit at Stoke Heath young offender institution involving juveniles during 2003, and one so far reported in 2004.

A new form for reporting self-harm was introduced across the prison estate in December 2002. This has improved the consistency with which self-harm incidents are reported and, by broadening the range of questions that are asked, improved the detail and quality of the information collected. Prior to 2003, data on the location in the prison where the self-harm incident occurred were not collated centrally.

Suicidal intent is not easy to establish. The reasons why people self-injure are highly complex, and it is often difficult to distinguish between acts of self-harm that were attempts at ending life, and those which occurred for other reasons. It is not possible, therefore, for the Prison Service to extrapolate from the data recording incidents of self-harm those acts that may have been attempts at suicide.

A number of intervention strategies have been introduced into prisons, young offender and juvenile establishments for people who self-harm. These include counselling, support groups, and specialised psychological interventions. While evaluation of these interventions is, at present, very limited, evidence from research in non-prison settings suggests that male and female adolescents who self-harm repeatedly may benefit from group therapy. A network of establishments has been set up to develop interventions, facilitate evaluation and share good practice. Guidance to staff on managing people who self-harm has also been circulated to establishments.

Akezhan Kazhegeldin

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether Mr. Akezhan Kazhegeldin, the former Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan, receives any protection from the British Government. [176352]

Mr. Blunkett: It has been the longstanding policy of the Government not to comment on such matters of security, including the identity of who may or may not receive protection in the United Kingdom.

National Offender Management Scheme

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether representatives from the voluntary sector have been asked to join the National Offender Management Service Advisory Board. [176676]

Paul Goggins: We are currently looking to identify a representative from the voluntary sector to join the National Offender Management Board.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what arrangements are being made for Pathfinder Projects under the National Offender Management Service structure; and if he will make a statement. [176678]

Paul Goggins: Discussions with a number of regions are under way. Final decisions have yet to be taken.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what role there will be for local probation boards in the event of the creation of a National Offender Management Service. [171412]

Paul Goggins: We are proposing to replace the existing probation boards with 10 regional management boards, in line with the nine English regions and Wales. They will have responsibility for commissioning offender management and employing offender management staff. The proposed structure is outlined in the document, "National Offender Management Service—Organisational Design", copies of which are available in the House Library.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what processes he will put in place to continue to allow the Probation Service to have an active relationship with victims of crime in the event of the service's inclusion within the National Offender Management Service. [171414]

Paul Goggins: The National Offender Management Service will have a key role to play in providing services to victims. We will ensure that the work currently undertaken by Probation Officers in this area is maintained.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the decision to advertise the jobs of *(a)* National Offender Manager and *(b)* 10 regional offender managers (England and Wales) in advance of agreement to set up the National Offender Management Service. [171415]

Paul Goggins: The Government are committed to the creation of the National Offender Management Service and it is crucial that key staff are recruited in order to establish the service.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Gateway Zero report will be published for the National Offender Management Service. [175828]

Paul Goggins: The Gateway Zero for the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) programme is taking place from 15 to 21 July. The final report will be sent to the Chief Executive of NOMS once it is completed. In keeping with normal practice it is not intended to publish the report.

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with *(a)* probation officers and *(b)* their representatives regarding the provision of their pensions under the National Offender Management Service; and if he will make a statement. [176316]

Paul Goggins: No discussions have taken place so far with probation officers or their representatives regarding the specific issue of the provision of their pensions. We are committed to on-going consultation with staff and unions on the full range of issues connected with the implementation of the National Offender Management Service.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many consultants have been employed by the National Offender Management Service Change Team. [172410]

Paul Goggins: Three individuals from consultancy firms, with specialist experience in change management, have been employed within the implementation team for a nine-month period to assist in initiating the change programme.

Overturned Convictions

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the *(a)* number and *(b)* percentage of miscarriages of justice at each level of the criminal justice system in each of the last 10 years. [173108]

Paul Goggins: The Home Secretary's powers to consider alleged miscarriages of justice came to an end on 31 March 1997, and were replaced by new powers vested in an independent body called the Criminal Cases Review Commission.

In its first seven years, the Commission received 6,647 applications for case review and referred 226 of these to the relevant court of appeal. Of the appeals resulting from these referrals that the courts have determined, some two-thirds have resulted in the conviction being quashed.

Figures available from the Court of Appeal (Criminal Division) show that 290 convictions were overturned in 1998, 171 in 1999, 150 in 2000, 136 in 2001 and 166 in 2002. These would have included cases referred by the Commission, in addition to normal in-time appeals and those where the court granted leave for an out-of-time appeal.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what procedures are in place to review case files following a referral to the courts by the Criminal Case Review Commission; and what mechanisms are in place *(a)* to address case-particular errors and *(b)* to identify general improvements that may reduce the risk of further miscarriages of justice. [173109]

Paul Goggins: Once closed by the Commission, the files for both referral and non-referral cases are retained for five years at which point the Commission reviews the files for record keeping purposes. It is possible for an applicant whose referral is unsuccessful or whose case is not referred by the Commission to reapply at any time.

It is an objective of the Commission to analyse the causes of miscarriages of justice and to suggest ways in which the criminal justice system might be improved to reduce their incidence. It is still too early for the Commission to do so authoritatively. The Commission has only referred 226 cases (as at March 2004) and about a fifth of these have yet to been determined. The difficulty in drawing sound conclusions relevant to today's criminal justice system is that these cases concern a wide spectrum of offences and convictions spread over half a century.

However when the Commission's database contains a greater number of recent cases, it should be possible to analyse comprehensively the legal and investigative issues that still commonly arise in miscarriages of justice. The Commission should then be able to formulate sound advice to other stakeholders and agencies within the criminal justice system on actions and legislation that could help to minimise their incidence.

While section 23 of the Criminal Appeal Act 1995 precludes the Commission from disclosing any case information obtained in the exercise of its functions the Commission does liaise with other agencies and individuals in the criminal justice system. This includes discussion of issues raised in cases reviewed by the Commission.

Parenting Orders and Curfews

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* parenting orders and *(b)* curfews have been issued in each local authority, broken down by region and listed in descending order. [172923]

Paul Goggins: The Youth Justice Board has collected figures on Parenting Orders and Curfew Orders since April 2000. The data, covering parenting orders of all kinds including orders made in relation to school attendance, is collected by Youth Offending Teams and is not available by local authority area. Table A provides details of the 4,461 Parenting Orders made by region and Youth Offending Team area, in descending order, from April 2000 to March 2004. Table B provides details of the 5,475 Curfew Orders made in respect of young offenders presented in the same way over the same period. Both tables will be placed in the Library. The data between January and March 2004 is provisional and subject to validation.

Prison/Probation Services

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff are employed by *(a)* the Prison Service at Head Office and *(b)* the National Probation Directorate; and how many at each are (i) consultants and (ii) contractual staff. [147659]

Paul Goggins: At the beginning of November 2003 there were 2,403 (full time equivalent) staff employed at Her Majesty's Prison Service Headquarters (including operational Area Offices). Of these, 1,330 were employed in central London offices. Central records are not held which specifically identify the number of consultants. However, information supplied by Headquarters Groups identifies a total of 122 agency staff and consultants working at Prison Service Headquarters at the beginning of November.

In December 2003, the National Probation Directorate employed 445 staff, of which 39 were consultants and 26 were contractors.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the Prison Service's alcohol strategy. [170517]

Paul Goggins: The Prison Service is in the final stages of development of a comprehensive alcohol strategy, which will be published shortly.

John Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the Youth Justice Board definition is of purposeful activity for juvenile prisoners. [174344]

Paul Goggins: The Youth Justice Board (YJB) now categorises activity by reference to its National Specification for Learning and Skills. The National Specification sets out the expectations of the Board for the delivery of learning and skills to young people held in young offender institutions on Detention and Training Orders. The overall aim is that young offenders should spend 30 hours a week in formal educational classes; 12 on enrichment activities, including access to arts learning and arts experiences, environmental studies and sport; and have seven hours private study time.

The YJB and the Prison Service now have a Service Level Agreement that measures education, training and personal development activity for young people in the juvenile secure estate and sets out agreed performance targets.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the new prisons being built in England and Wales; and what category of prisoner each will accommodate. [174488]

Paul Goggins: Two prisons are under construction in England and Wales through the Private Finance Initiative. Bronzefield, at Ashford, Middlesex, is a 450 place prison which will accommodate female offenders and is on schedule to open in June 2004. The second prison, sited at Peterborough, comprises 480 places for male offenders and 360 for female offenders and is scheduled to open in March 2005.

Both prisons are being procured to Category B security standards. Bronzefield will have provision for up to five Category A female prisoners and both prisons will have a 12 place Mother and Baby Unit.

Probation Hostels

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to set up and operate probation hostels in England and Wales which will be exclusively used for convicted sex offenders. [172268]

Paul Goggins: There are currently no plans for any probation hostel in England and Wales to be used exclusively by convicted sex offenders.

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the sex offender treatment programme is available in probation hostels in England and Wales; and what assessment has been made of its effectiveness. [172270]

Paul Goggins: Residents of probation hostels (approved premises) have access to the accredited sex offender treatment programme run by the local Probation Area. Treatment takes place off-site, usually in local probation offices, not in the Probation hostel.

The community based programmes are currently subject to an evaluation study conducted by the Universities of Liverpool and Leicester. It is too early for reconviction studies to be completed.

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to construct and open new probation hostels in England and Wales; and if he will make a statement. [172273]

Paul Goggins: Currently there are plans to open five new approved premises in England and Wales. These will be operated under the Prospects programme. They will provide high quality support from custody to the community for non-violent offenders with a history of drug dependency. The programme represents an innovative way of working within the local community to reduce crime.

Probation Service

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has regarding the training programme for probation officers after *(a)* 2006 and *(b)* 2008. [176314]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* The current two-year Diploma in Probation Studies programme is well established and was the subject of a very positive inspection report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation in 2003.

In 2003, the degree element of the programme was re-tendered and contracts were let with higher education providers for a period of three years, with the potential for an extension to 2008. Plans for capacity building in preparation for the implementation of the Criminal Justice Act include an intake of trainee probation officers in 2005. The size of the cohort has not yet been agreed. This cohort will graduate in 2007.

Going beyond 2006, responsibility for training will lie within the new National Offender Management Service. Development work on this has yet to commence. Making sure that the Service has well-trained officers and staff will be one of the key priorities in our strategy to reduce re-offending.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how individual probation services will be held to account so that they reduce re-offending. [167517]

Paul Goggins: Regional Offender Managers will be responsible for ensuring the effective management of all offenders regardless of whether they have received a custodial or community sentence or a combination of the two. The Regional Offender Managers will be line managed by the National Offender Manager who will report directly to the Chief Executive and will ultimately be responsible for reducing re-offending.

Productivity

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action he is taking to *(a)* increase the productivity and *(b)* cut the costs of his Department and its agencies and non-departmental public bodies. [171880]

Fiona Mactaggart: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 148W.

Prolific Offenders

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he has taken to target the most prolific offenders. [174959]

Paul Goggins: On 30 March 2004, the Prime Minister announced the development of a new strategy to target the most prolific offenders in our communities. Building on the success of the many prolific offenders schemes which have already been developed, local areas will be asked to focus on those individuals who, in their judgement, pose the greatest threat to the safety and confidence of their local communities.

Public Order

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how Chief Officers of police forces are held to account in relation to their force's actions concerning animal rights protesters' crimes. [175253]

Caroline Flint: Chief Officers are responsible for the day to day operational management of their force. Police authorities through their statutory duty maintain an efficient and effective police force for their area. I am in regular contact with Senior Police Officers to discuss the action the police are taking to deal with animal rights related crime.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which police forces are subject to key performance targets in relation to crimes committed by animal rights protesters. [175254]

Caroline Flint: There are no key performance targets in relation to crimes committed by animal rights protesters.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether central Home Office records are maintained of individuals who are convicted of crimes associated with animal rights protests. [175255]

Caroline Flint: No central Home Office records are maintained of individuals who are convicted of crimes associated with animal rights protests.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many areas have been made a designated public place for the purpose of curfew orders in each year since 2001 in *(a)* England and Wales and *(b)* in each county. [175257]

Paul Goggins: The reference to designated public places for the purpose of curfew order since 2001 is taken to refer to local child curfew schemes, which were revised during that year. There have been no such designations for the purpose of a local child curfew scheme. The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 contains powers for the dispersal of groups and removal of persons under 16 to their homes. These powers were implemented in January 2004 and reports indicate they have already been used. Statistics are not yet available from the police on the use of these new powers but will be available later in the year.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many curfew orders have been breached in each year since 1998; and how many of these breached curfew orders were punished by *(a)* fines and *(b)* prison sentences; [175258]

(2) how many curfew orders have been issued since 1998 in *(a)* England and Wales and *(b)* each county. [175259]

Paul Goggins: The information requested relating to England and Wales for the years 1998 to 2002 is contained in the table.

Statistics on court proceedings for 2003 will be published in the autumn.

Number of persons of all ages sentenced to a curfew order at all courts for all offences, by police force area, and those persons dealt with for breaching such orders England and Wales 1998 to 2002[1]

	Sentenced to a curfew order				
Police force area	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
Avon and Somerset	—	—	54	181	487
Bedfordshire	—	—	12	15	26
Cambridgeshire	10	38	75	65	79
Cheshire	—	1	10	16	45
Cleveland	—	—	4	31	69
Cumbria	—	1	10	15	22
Derbyshire	—	—	28	97	136
Devon and Cornwall	—	4	52	78	113
Dorset	—	—	13	63	106
Durham	—	1	29	26	55
Essex	—	—	10	16	51
Gloucestershire	—	—	6	4	14
Greater Manchester	539	776	638	714	896
Hampshire	—	7	106	203	290
Hertfordshire	—	—	18	54	114
Humberside	—	5	19	27	34
Kent	1	1	19	69	122
Lancashire	—	1	58	61	195
Leicestershire	—	1	65	119	214
Lincolnshire	—	—	4	8	7
London, City of	—	—	2	2	1
Merseyside	—	—	4	39	61
Metropolitan Police	50	63	151	284	589
Norfolk	272	340	312	320	308
Northamptonshire	—	—	—	—	3
Northumbria	—	1	42	100	146
North Yorkshire	—	—	4	11	28
Nottinghamshire	—	—	9	28	96
South Yorkshire	—	3	129	131	218
Staffordshire	—	1	16	59	76
Suffolk	34	69	88	79	84
Surrey	—	1	7	21	19
Sussex	—	2	35	90	148
Thames Valley	41	58	83	155	186
Warwickshire	1	1	9	12	19
West Mercia	—	2	25	65	82
West Midlands	—	2	44	68	220
West Yorkshire	31	168	303	338	557
Wiltshire	—	1	18	24	17
Dyfed Powys	—	—	10	38	35
Gwent	—	—	—	—	13
North Wales	—	1	33	69	118
South Wales	—	8	43	68	167
Total England and Wales	979	1,577	2,597	3,863	6,266
Persons dealt with for breaching curfew orders	204	280	473	761	960
of whom:					
Number fined	88	121	215	345	354
Number sentenced to immediate custody	64	83	116	185	240

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make animal rights-related crimes a priority item in the next National Policing Plan. [175464]

Caroline Flint: No decisions have been made on the contents of the National Policing Plan for 2005–08.

Secure Units

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what information he collects on re-offending rates for those who have been contained in secure units. [175834]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 25 May 2004]:* We plan shortly to publish research on reconviction rates for juvenile offenders, including those who have received custodial sentences. Because some offenders serve their sentences in more than one type of establishment, it is not possible to give a breakdown between different types of custodial establishment.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to ensure that children sent to secure units are contained as near to their families as possible. [175835]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 25 May 2004]:* The Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) is responsible for commissioning and purchasing secure accommodation for young people who receive custodial sentences , and for placement decisions.

It aims to improve the geographical spread of places suitable for the younger and more vulnerable young people in secure training centres (STCs) and local authority secure children's homes (LASCHs). It has already expanded two STCs by a total of 64 places and a new one is due to open this summer at Oakhill, Milton Keynes. Based on modelling of the home locations of young people placed since April 2000 , the 80 places that will be provided should improve the geographical coverage, in particular for young offenders from north London.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is the policy of the Youth Justice Board to reduce the number of beds it commissions from local authority secure children's homes; and what assessment he has made of the effects of such a policy. [175837]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 25 May 2004]*: The Youth Justice Board's policy is to achieve higher standards of provision across the juvenile secure estate. This includes increasing and improving the geographical spread of places suitable for younger and more vulnerable young people in secure training centres (STCs) and local authority secure children's homes (LASCHs).

As part of this policy, in 2004–05, 80 new STC places are due to open and 64 of the LASCH places will no longer be needed.

Self-harm

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many children have used strip/safe clothing as an instrument for self-harm in each of the last 10 years; and if he will make a statement; [175468]

(2) what representations he has received on the suitability of the strip/safe clothing worn by children assessed as being at risk of suicide and self-harm in prison; and if he will make a statement. [175469]

Paul Goggins: I am not aware of any case where a juvenile (aged 15 to 17 years) has used safer clothing to self-harm. However, such data are not collated centrally, and examination of each individual incident would involve disproportionate cost.

Prison Service policy is that normal clothing must not be removed from at-risk prisoners as a matter of course, but as necessary for the immediate safety of the prisoner, and then for the shortest time possible.

Sex Offenders

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many probation hostels in England and Wales provide a sex offender treatment programme. [172271]

Paul Goggins: Accredited sex offender treatment programmes are run by local Probation Areas, in specially adapted facilities.

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what specialist training is provided for staff who work with sex offenders in hostels in England and Wales. [172272]

Paul Goggins: Probation staff who work with sex offenders attend the training courses approved by the Correctional Services Accreditation Panel. For hostel workers these focus particularly on techniques for motivating the offender to address their offence behaviour together with training in risk assessment and risk management.

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will give a guarantee that sex offenders will not be resettled in approved probation and bail hostels that are situated near to schools, play areas and swimming pools. [173176]

Paul Goggins: Approved premises play a vital role in the safe accommodation and supervision of offenders in the community, and must be managed as a national resource to achieve the best level of protection to the public and to victims. Every offender is assessed before placement and due account taken of the risks posed by proximity to schools and similar facilities.

Young Offenders Institutions

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many children with an assessment of vulnerability have been sent to young offenders institutions in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [175466]

Paul Goggins: Youth Offending Teams make the initial assessment as to whether a child is vulnerable. The ASSET assessment tool developed by the Youth Justice Board (YJB) sets out how the Youth Offending Team (Yot) should consider vulnerability and evidence their concerns. The following factors are taken into account for each child:

Whether they are bullied, abused or neglected (behaviour of others)

Whether they are affected by separation, loss or change of care (other events)

Whether they are risk taking, including substance misuse (own behaviour)

Whether there are indications of self-harm or suicide concerns.

In deciding on the appropriate placement for each child assessed by the Yot as vulnerable, the YJB (or in some cases, the Prison Service Juvenile Group on behalf of the Secretary of State) takes into account the nature and level of the young person's vulnerability, their age and type of offence, their educational and healthcare needs and other relevant factors, such as proximity to home.

Data on the number of children who were assessed as vulnerable by a Yot and subsequently placed in a Prison Service Young Offender Institution since April 2000[1], are shown in the table.

[1] Figures are only available from April 2000 as this was when the juvenile secure estate was established.

April to March	*Remanded*	*Detention and Training Order*	*Section 90/91*[1]	*Total*
2000–01	132	280	20	432
2001–02	872	946	57	1,875
2002–03	1,399	1,347	157	2,903
2003–04	1,635	1,529	173	3,337

[1] Powers of the Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000.

The Prison Service is committed to ensuring that the children in its care, particularly the more vulnerable, are properly protected and safeguarded. All establishments in the Prison Service juvenile estate have child protection committees and have put in place child protection policies, anti-bullying strategies and procedures for identifying and caring for those at risk of harming themselves.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the countries which now have troops stationed in Afghanistan; and how many troops are deployed in each case. [175150]

Mr. Ingram: There are 32 nations contributing to the ISAF Multinational Brigade which operates within Kabul (although temporary deployments outside the city are authorised) and totals approximately 5,900 personnel. The nations are, Albania Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, The United Kingdom, The United States and Afghanistan. The UK commitment is approximately 360. ISAF also includes a German led Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Konduz. The exact numbers deployed for each of these nations are a matter for the nations concerned.

In addition to ISAF, the US led coalition operates across Afghanistan and includes the UK led PRT at Mazar-e-Sharif numbering approximately 100 personnel and a New Zealand PRT at Barman. While its area of operations covers the whole of Afghanistan it is focused mainly on the South. We do not hold details of all contributors to the coalition or the exact numbers available to the coalition forces commander. That information is a matter for the individual coalition contributors.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what recent representations he has received from the NATO Secretary-General regarding the security situation in Afghanistan; [176360]

(2) what recent discussions he has had with his NATO counterparts regarding the security situation in Afghanistan; and if he will make a statement. [176362]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence routinely discusses the security situation in Afghanistan with the NATO Secretary General and Alliance Defence Ministers.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the results of the force generation conference held in Brussels in March with the aim of manning and equipping the First Stage of the expansion of NATO's role in Afghanistan. [176363]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* A conference to generate forces to proceed with the further expansion of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was held at the Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers Europe, in Mons on 11 March 2004. The conference was broadly successful and the United Kingdom, in conjunction with Denmark, Finland, Germany, Lithuania, Norway, Romania and Sweden, has pledged sufficient forces to implement the first phase of the ISAF's expansion. Some shortfalls remain, however, that predominantly relate to aspects of the ISAF's continuing mission in Kabul: we are working actively with our partners in NATO and the ISAF to resolve these issues.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the countries contributing to the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan; and what the current contribution of each country is. [176364]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* There are 32 nations contributing to the International Security Assistance Force Kabul Multinational Brigade which totals approximately 5,900 personnel. The nations are, Albania Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, The United Kingdom, The United States and Afghanistan. The UK commitment is approximately 360. ISAF also includes a German led Provincial Reconstruction Team in Konduz. The exact numbers deployed for each of these nations are a matter for the nations concerned.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much money his Department spent in Afghanistan in each of the last three years; and if he will provide a breakdown of that expenditure by main heading. [176598]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence identifies the costs of operations in terms of the net additional costs it has incurred. The costs that the Department would have incurred regardless of the operation taking place, such as wages and salaries, are not included. Savings on activities that have not occurred because of the operation—training exercises for example—are taken into account in arriving at the net figures.

The net additional cost of operations in Afghanistan from 2001–03 by main heading are as follows:

	£ million
2001–02 outturn	
Operating costs	188
Capital expenditure	34
Total	222
2002–03 outturn	
Operating costs	236
Capital expenditure	75
Total	311

It is still too early to say what the final outturn for 2003–04 will be but a total of £55 million was voted at spring supplementary estimates for Afghanistan comprising £40 million for operating costs and £15 million for Capital Expenditure. Final audited figures will be published in the Department's Annual Report and Accounts in September.

Al-Yamamah Programme

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many claims by BAE Systems for the provision of accommodation and support services for

overseas visitors have been endorsed since 1 January 1999 by staff of his Department's Director General of the Saudi Armed Forces Project regarding the Al-Yamamah programme; and what the value of these claims was. [175878]

Mr. Hoon: There have been 57 BAE Systems' claims endorsed by members of the Director General of the Saudi Armed Forces Project that have included charges for the provision of accommodation and support services to Saudi service and civilian personnel on duty in the United Kingdom. The personnel involved were either attending training courses associated with the operation or maintenance of equipment supplied under the Al-Yamamah programme, or formed part of UK-based liaison teams monitoring contract performance in the logistics and training fields. The details of these claims are confidential between the two Governments, and I am therefore withholding that information under Exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. However, their overall value has averaged around £1.25 million annually since 1 January 1999.

Amnesty International Report (Kosovo)

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what representations he has received concerning the Amnesty International report of May 2004 Facts and Figures on trafficking of women and girls for forced prostitution in Kosovo; and if he will make a statement. [176344]

Mr. Ingram: Amnesty International wrote to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence on 6 May 2004 with a copy of the report, "'So does it mean that we have the rights?" Protecting the human rights of women and girls trafficked for forced prostitution in Kosovo'. I also refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 17 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 666W, to my hon. Friend the Member for Halifax (Mrs. Mahon).

BAE Systems

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what support his Department has offered BAE Systems in their bid to upgrade helicopters in Bulgaria. [175799]

Mr. Ingram: The Defence Export Services Organisation has co-ordinated Government support for BAE System's bid to upgrade helicopters in Bulgaria. This has included briefing the Bulgarians on the UK's concept of operations for helicopters in a NATO environment and raising the matter with representatives of the Bulgarian Government.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what evaluation his Department has made of the value for money of the BAE Systems bid for the upgrading of helicopters in Bulgaria. [175800]

Mr. Ingram: None. Overseas governments reach their own decisions on how best to meet the equipment needs of their armed forces.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many meetings between BAE Systems and Bulgarian military personnel the British military attaché in Sofia has attended in *(a)* the United Kingdom and *(b)* Bulgaria; and on what dates. [175801]

Mr. Ingram: The British Defence Attaché in Sofia has regularly attended meetings between BAE Systems and Bulgarian military personnel in Bulgaria.

One record has been traced of a meeting held in the UK on 9 December 2002. This was attended by the British Defence Attaché, BAE Systems officials and a Bulgarian delegation led by the Chief of Defence Staff of the Bulgarian Armed Forces.

Belize

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the strength was of UK armed forces in Belize in each of the last 25 years. [175241]

Mr. Ingram: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. The United Kingdom garrison in Belize was withdrawn in 1994. From the early 1980s until reductions in advance of withdrawal in the early 1990s, the garrison comprised a full battalion group with an element of RAF support, numbering in total an estimated 1,200 to 1,500 military personnel. In 1994, the garrison was replaced by the much smaller British Army Training Support Unit Belize (BATSUB). BATSUB currently has around 70 permanent military staff. In addition, many hundreds of personnel pass through BATSUB for short periods of training each year.

Computer File Formats

Mr. Allan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his Department's policy is in respect of the computer file formats used for the *(a)* distribution and *(b)* archiving of publicly available documents. [173361]

Mr. Caplin: The policy of the Ministry of Defence is to follow the "Guidelines for Government Websites", issued by the Office of the e-Envoy, when making documents publicly available in electronic form. Most documents published on www.mod.uk are in Hypertext Mark-Up Language (HTML) or Portable Document Format (pdf).

Declarations of Interest

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what declarations of interest were made by civil servants in the Saudi Armed Forces Project Office of the Ministry of Defence between 2000 and 2002. [175063]

Mr. Hoon *[holding answer 21 May 2004]*: The question is assumed to refer to declarations made by civil servants when they hold private investments in companies with which they have official dealings. There are no records or knowledge of any such declarations by officials employed by the Saudi Armed Forces Project Office during this period.

Defence Bodies

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library a copy of the balance sheets of the central management groups *(a)* Director General Information and Communication Services and *(b)* Defence Communication Services for financial year 1999–2000. [176189]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the letter I sent on 21 August 2003, Reference: D/Min(AF)/Al PQ 2185N/03/L) to the hon. Member for North Essex (Mr. Jenkin), copies of which have been placed in the Library of the House. The management grouping Balance Sheets are shown under the Central TLB for the Director General Information and Communication Services and the Chief of Defence Logistics TLB for the Defence Communication Services Agency.

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost of capital charges incurred by the Defence Communication Services Agency was for financial years *(a)* 1999–2000 and *(b)* 2000–01. [176194]

Mr. Ingram: The cost of capital charges reported by the Defence Communication Services Agency for the appropriate years were as follows:

Financial year	*£ million*
1999–2000	43
2000–01	58

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) if he will place in the Library a copy of *(a)* operating cost statements, *(b)* statements of recognised gains and losses, *(c)* cash flow statements and *(d)* balance sheets for the Chief of Defence Logistics management group DG Defence Logistics Command Information Systems for financial year 2001–02; [176200]

(2) if he will place in the Library a copy of the *(a)* operating cost statement, *(b)* statement of recognised gains and losses and *(c)* cash flow statement for the Chief of Defence Logistics management group Defence Fuels Group for financial year 1999–2000. [176152]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave the hon. Member for Aldershot (Mr. Howarth) on 20 November 2003 *Official Report*, column 1262W. I also refer the hon. Member to the holding answer I gave the hon. Member for North Essex (Mr. Jenkin) on 6 October 2003 *Official Report*, column 1158W covering related financial statements, which includes the Defence Communication Services Agency and Defence Fuels Group.

Departmental Annual Report

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much the production of his Department's latest annual report cost; how many copies were printed; how many copies of it were sold at its cover price; to whom copies of the report have been provided free of charge; and how many copies were provided free of charge. [171139]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence's Annual Report and Accounts 2002–03 (HC1125) was published by TSO (The Stationery Office). This was the first year for which the Annual Performance Report and Departmental Resource Accounts have been published as a single document. The MOD bought 750 copies of the Annual Report and Accounts 2002–03 at a cost of £19,584.00. MOD copies were distributed within the Department, to other Government Departments, other Governments, the HCDC, the House Libraries, Conservative and Liberal Democrat Defence and Treasury spokesmen, the Leader of the Cross Benches, and to members of the press. The Report is available on the MOD website, www.mod.uk

TSO's production costs and the number of copies it printed are commercially confidential. However, TSO has advised that as of 20 May 2004, it had sold 402 copies of the Report at the cover price of £36.00.

Producing the Annual Report draws on performance management and financial information across the Department. A large number of people are involved in the process and it is not possible to calculate the cost of the Report's production without incurring disproportionate expense.

Early Retirement

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many staff in his Department took early retirement, and at what total cost, in the last financial year. [171865]

Mr. Caplin: In the financial year 2003–04, 1320 staff took early retirement (870 non-industrial staff, 160 industrial staff and 280 staff from the Trading Funds). The figures have been individually rounded to the nearest ten. The figures are for permanent staff and include Trading Funds but exclude those on career breaks, long-term sick leave, secondments etc. The figures are full-time equivalent, which is a measure of the size of the workforce that takes account of the fact that some people work part-time.

Information on the total cost of early retirement can only be provided at disproportionate cost.

India (Hawk Aircraft)

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the Memorandum of Understanding agreed with India concerning the supply of Hawk advanced jet trainers allows the project to be suspended by the UK if circumstances in India change; and if he will make a statement. [176447]

Mr. Ingram: The detailed provisions of Memoranda of Understanding concluded in confidence with overseas governments are withheld under Exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Parliamentary Questions

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many *(a)* ordinary written and *(b)* named day questions his Department received in (i) the 2002–03 and (ii) this parliamentary session up to the most recent date for which figures are available, broken down by month; [170774]

(2) what proportion of *(a)* ordinary written questions to his Department were answered within five sitting days of tabling and *(b)* Questions for a named day received a substantive answer on that day on (i) 2002–03 and (ii) this parliamentary session up to the most recent date for which figures are available, broken down by month. [170775]

Mr. Caplin: Information on the number of named day and ordinary written questions tabled to Defence Ministers in the 2002–03 parliamentary session and the current session up to and including 30 April is set out in the following table:

Session 2002–03	*Number of named day questions*	*Number of ordinary written questions*
13–30 November 2002	125	260
December 2002	122	232
January 2003	68	476
February 2003	69	316
March 2003	77	298
April 2003	65	295
May 2003	83	427
June 2003	86	376
July 2003	45	372
August 2003	—	—
September 2003	49	217
October 2003	29	297
Up to 20 November 2003	51	186

Current Session	*Number of named day questions*	*Number of ordinary written questions*
26–30 November 2003	42	71
December 2003	46	265
January 2004	64	334
February 2004	83	282
March 2004	72	314
April 2004	46	269

The proportion of named day questions answered on the day specified, or ordinary written questions answered within five sitting days is not readily available on the current MOD PQ database and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Defence Ministers aim to answer named day questions on the day named and ordinary written questions within five days. I also refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 31 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 907W, to the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker) by my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House (Mr. Hain).

Iraq

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what attempts have been made in interviews conducted with Saddam Hussein to get him to reveal the locations of weapons of mass destruction, and their production facilities, in Iraq. [177070]

Mr. Hoon: Saddam Hussein, since his capture by the United States Forces, has remained in US custody. During his debrief he will have been asked questions covering the whole spectrum of political and military interest.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what *(a)* weapons, *(b)* vehicles and *(c)* other equipment has been supplied to private security forces contracted to United Kingdom Government interests in Iraq; and at what cost. [173472]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence has not provided any weapons, vehicles or other equipment to Private Security Forces in Iraq.

Joint Combat Aircraft

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what representations he has received from *(a)* industry and *(b)* his Department's Integrated Project Team on the likely costs of resolving the weight problem of the Short Take Off Vertical Landing variant of the Joint Combat Aircraft; [176356]

(2) if he will make a statement on the progress of work on the Future Joint Combat Aircraft; [176358]

(3) what representations he has received from collaboration partners in the Joint Strike Fighter project about the weight problems with the aircraft. [176372]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 11 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 221W, to the hon. Member for Hereford (Mr. Keetch) about the impact of the current weight predictions for the Short Take Off/ Vertical Landing variant of the Joint Strike Fighter. Progress on the Future Joint Combat Aircraft programme is clearly linked to the work in hand to address the problem.

Ministerial and officials regularly discuss the Joint Strike Fighter programme. There have been no specific representations from industry or the partner nations on the costs of solving the weight problem.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he expects the Joint Combat Aircraft to meet its projected in-service date of 2012. [176357]

Mr. Ingram: Our current planning assumption remains that the forecast in-service Ddate for the Joint Combat Aircraft is 2012. Formal approval of the in-service date is not required before the first main investment decision point which is due in late 2006.

Kosovo

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the 1st Battalion of the Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment will be replaced as a spearhead battalion in Kosovo; and by which units. [176361]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* The 1st Battalion the Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment withdrew from Kosovo as planned on 17 April 2004. They continue to be on standby as the Ready Battalion of the NATO Operational Reserve Force (ORF) for the Balkans until 30 June. After this date, the US will take over the Ready Battalion role, with the 2nd Battalion the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment then forming one of three ORF standby battalions on lower readiness to deploy to the Balkans.

Land Accident Investigation Team

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many investigations were conducted by the Land Accident Investigation Team for the last full year for which figures are available, broken down by nature; and how many and what percentage of investigations involved the deaths of *(a)* service personnel and *(b)* civilians. [176023]

Mr. Caplin: Between 1 April 2003 and 31 March 2004, the Land Accident Investigation Team investigated 161 reported incidents.

These investigations, broken down by nature, are as follows:

	Number
Adventurous Training	12
Ammunition	52
Equipment	13
Military Training	24
Miscellaneous	8
Physical Training	7
Vehicle Accidents	45

Of these, 20 (12.4 per cent.) involved the deaths of service personnel, while three (1.8 per cent.) involved the deaths of civilians.

Medals

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will aim to complete distribution of the new General Service Medal with clasp Canal Zone by 11 November. [175261]

Mr. Caplin: No, despite the allocation of additional resources to the task of assessing these claims, it will not be possible to complete distribution by 11 November. Applications continue to arrive at between 200 and 300 a week. I have, however, set action in train in order that productivity can be maximised and the backlog reduced.

Military Tattoos

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the military tattoos that have taken place since the last Royal Tournament; when they took place; and what form they took. [175632]

Mr. Ingram: Following the last Royal Tournament in 1999, the Department has continued to mount major set-piece events/tattoos to demonstrate the capability of the armed forces. The armed forces have helped stage the Royal Military Tattoo in 2000, the International Festival of the Sea in 2001, and the Queen's Golden Jubilee Celebrations in Portsmouth in 2002. The department has also continued to participate in a wide variety of smaller events such as Open Days, ships visits, County Shows and showcase events such as the Edinburgh Military Tattoo and the Fairford Royal International Air Tattoo (RIAT).

Missile Defence

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much the Government has spent on its participation in the United States-led development of a missile defence shield; and how much he plans to spend over the next year. [176375]

Mr. Hoon: For the period up to 31 March 2004 I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 19 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 920W, to the hon. Member for Hereford (Mr. Keetch). For financial year 2004–05 expenditure by the United Kingdom on research specific to Ballistic Missile Defence technology will be in the order of £6 million.

MOD Estate/Properties

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list *(a)* land and buildings owned or leased by the Department and *(b)* land that the Department has rights to use in (i) Chorley and (ii) Lancashire. [173774]

Mr. Caplin: The information requested is as follows.

(a) Land and buildings owned or leased in Chorley and Lancashire:

(i) Chorley:

Reserve Forces and Cadets Association, Devonshire Road

(ii) Other Lancashire Sites:

Blackburn—Army Careers Information Office, 46 Church Street

Blackburn—Reserve Forces and Cadets Association, Canterbury Street

Blackpool—Army Careers Information Office, 162 Church Street

Burnley—Army Careers Information Office, 14 Yorkshire Street

Bury—Holcombe Training Centre, Hawkshaw

Lancaster—Halton Training Camp, Halton

Lancaster—Married Quarters, Anderson Close

Preston—Communications Site, Barnacre, Garstang

Preston—Office Accommodation, Ashton House, Cottam Lane

Preston—Armed Forces Careers Office, 83aFishergate

Preston—Armed Forces Careers Office, 54 Fishergate

Preston—Fulwood Barracks, Fulwood

Preston—Office Accommodation, 46 Edward VII Quay, Navigation Way

Preston—Radio Inskip Communications Station, Inskip

Preston—Married Quarters, Brooklands Avenue, Sherwood Way and Watling Street

Preston—Weeton Barracks, Camp and Married Quarters, Weeton

Preston—Married Quarters, Butlers Meadow, Warton

(b) Land with Rights to Use:

(i) Chorley:

None

(ii) Other Lancashire Sites:

Burnley—Army Careers Information Office, 14 Yorkshire Street (Car Parking)

Lancaster—Halton Training Camp (Mooring on River Lime)

Preston—Armed Forces Careers Office, 83a Fishergate (Car Parking)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 31 March, *Official Report*, column 1483W, on MOD properties, if he will break down the figures given by *(a)* type of accommodation and *(b)* number of bedrooms. [171870]

Mr. Caplin: A breakdown of the previous answer is not available. The Defence Housing Executive keeps current records of housing type and occupancy, but does not keep historical records of data in the detail requested, due to the frequent changes to property.

Nimrod MRA4

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 5 May 2004, *Official*

Report, column 1523W, on Nimrod MRA4, what procedures are in place to ensure that a consistent approach to design, development and manufacture is taken in decisions on procurement when these decisions are separated under the contract. [175434]

Mr. Ingram: A consistent approach to design, development and manufacture will be best achieved for Nimrod MRA4 by contracting for production based on a mature and stable design standard resulting from the design and development phase, including test and evaluation. Both phases will then continue to be managed by the same Ministry of Defence and BAE Systems teams to ensure the most coherent programme is delivered.

Photographs (Daily Mirror)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the Daily Mirror informed his Department before publication that the photographs claiming to be of abuse of an Iraqi prisoner by British armed forces were to be published. [175201]

Mr. Ingram: The Daily Mirror informed the Department's Press Office at around 3:45 pm on 30 April 2004 that they would be publishing some photographs purporting to show physical abuse of an Iraqi detainee by British Army personnel. A selection of photographs was subsequently published the next day.

Plastic Baton Rounds

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* L5A7 and *(b)* L21A1 plastic baton rounds have been supplied to British forces in Iraq. [176087]

Mr. Ingram: I am withholding details of equipment numbers under Exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what tests have been carried out, and when, on the *(a)* L5A7 and *(b)* L21A1 plastic baton rounds for use in hot weather climates. [176088]

Mr. Ingram: Tests were carried out in February 2004 on the L5A7 Plastic Baton Round for use in hot climates. The L21A1 Plastic Baton Round was tested when brought into service in 2001 and there is a continuing programme to test the round for use in hot climates.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the recommended storage temperature is for *(a)* L5A7 and *(b)* L21A1 plastic baton rounds; and what the recommended safe shelf storage period is for each. [176089]

Mr. Ingram: The recommended storage temperature for the L5A7 Baton Round is -10C to +40C and the safe shelf storage period is two years. The recommended storage temperature for the L21A1 is −21C to +40C with a safe shelf storage period of 18 months.

Procurement

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 4 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1451W, on procurement, what procedures are in place to *(a)* ensure that a consistent approach is taken to procurement decisions and *(b)* coordinate procurement decisions. [175435]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence makes many procurement decisions each year. The vast majority are made locally under delegated authority, within the framework of central departmental policy and guidance. Decisions on major procurements are made by the Department's central approvals machinery, with Ministers involvement required for equipment projects whose total acquisition cost exceeds £50 million. For the biggest projects, other Government Departments, including in particular HM Treasury, are also part of the decision-making process.

RAF Boulmer

Mr. Beith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer to the right hon. Member for Berwick-upon-Tweed of 4 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1450W, on RAF Boulmer, if he will review, under the terms of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information, his decision to cite Exemption 2 of the Code in support of his decision not to disclose details of the Investment Appraisal. [176337]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* I have referred the decision for independent review in accordance with the Ministry of Defence's usual policy and procedures for compliance with the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Sergeant Steve Roberts

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what disciplinary actions have been *(a)* recommended and *(b)* taken following the death of Sergeant Steve Roberts; and what the duration was of the Special Investigation Branch investigation. [175195]

Mr. Ingram: The Royal Military Police Special Investigation Branch commenced their investigation into the death of Sergeant Steve Roberts on 24 March 2003 and issued their Final Report on 20 April 2004. As their findings are now subject to legal consideration, it would be inappropriate to comment further at this stage.

Territorial Army

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what proportion of Territorial Army bounty payments were made on time this year; what the causes of failed payments were; what the timetable is for resolution of such problems; and if he will make a statement. [175044]

Mr. Caplin: To determine the proportion of bounty payments paid promptly would require every TA unit, in conjunction with Army pay staff to examine manually the pay account of each TA soldier to identify instances where payment was delayed, and the reasons why this might have occurred. This could only be done at a disproportionate cost. However, as at 30 April 2004 approximately 16,000 bounty payments had been paid.

The late or incorrect submission of data to the Army Pay computer may cause a small number of individuals to experience a slight delay in receiving their bounty payment, there are no known problems affecting the payment of bounties.

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the man training days budget for the Territorial Army was for each of the last 10 years; how many man training days that represents in each case; what the manning establishment of the Territorial Army was in each of the last 10 years; and what the actual manning level was in each year. [176099]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 27 May 2004]*: The establishment and strength figures for the Territorial Army (TA) for the last 10 years are as follows:

	Establishment	*Strength*
1994	75,624	65,000
1995	63,950	59,900
1996	59,000	57,300
1997	72,179	57,600
1998	41,200	57,000
1999	41,200	51,800
2000	41,200	44,800
2001	41,200	41,500
2002	41,900	40,300
2003	41,900	39,011

Information on the budget available for TA Man Training Days (MTDs) prior to the 1998 Strategic Defence Review is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost The information requested for each financial year since 1998 is as follows:

	MTDs Budget (£ million)
1998–99	124.3
1999–2000	122.1
2000–01	125.5
2001–02	104.7
2002–03	103.4
2003–04	113.8

This figure does not translate into a specific number of MTDs, since each individual is paid differently according to rank, skill, and length of service. As a general guide, the MTD budget enables each member of the TA to undertake some 30 MTDs per year. Some specialist elements of the TA may be allocated more or less than this figure depending on their unit and role.

Training

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether it is possible for a person to have served as a national serviceman for two years without completing basic training. [176742]

Mr. Ingram: Between 1950 and 1960, when the period of full time service was set at two years, the policy was that all national servicemen would have routinely received basic training appropriate to their service. It would therefore be highly unlikely that a national serviceman would have served two years without completing basic training.

Trooping of the Colour

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost was of staging the Trooping of the Colour in 2003. [176285]

Mr. Ingram: The additional cost of the Trooping of the Colour 2003 including all rehearsals, the General Officer Commanding's review, the Colonel's review and The Queen's Birthday Parade was £22,500. This can be attributed to the hiring of vehicles required to transport the participating troops to and from central London. Other minor costs, such as dry cleaning, communications and rations may also have been incurred, but these cannot be separated from general expenditure for similar purposes made throughout the year. The cost of seating spectators in 2003 amounted to some £141,000, which was recovered from the sale of tickets for the event. The Metropolitan Police and Westminster City Council may also have incurred costs, but my Department has no visibility of the extent of these.

UN Operations

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on what date the International Committee of the Red Cross report was received by him or his ministerial colleagues; and when it was first brought to his attention. [173003]

Mr. Hoon: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave on 20 May 2004 *Official Report*, column 1148W to the hon. Member for Wokingham (Mr. Redwood).

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on what date the International Committee of the Red Cross report on the treatment by Coalition forces of prisoners of war in Iraq was passed to the Foreign Office. [173403]

Mr. MacShane: I have been asked to reply.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary gave to the right hon. and learned Member for Devizes (Mr. Ancram) on 26 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1637W.

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how the provisions of the Third Geneva Convention, articles 70, 122, 12 and the Fourth Geneva Convention, articles 106, 136, 137, 138, 140 are delivered to the families of Iraqi prisoners of war and civilian detainees. [173452]

Mr. Hoon: Individuals brought to the United Kingdom detention facility are asked to complete a form with details of an individual who they wish to be notified of their detention. The nominated individual is then informed by the armed forces. To date there have been no complaints lodged by the internees that their families are not aware or notified of their whereabouts.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which private organisations are providing support to UK military forces in Iraq; and what role each has. [174351]

Mr. Ingram: The United Kingdom Ministry of Defence has many contracts with UK companies for the provision of support to deployed operations. These contracts are generally for the provision of service support, welfare and equipment support. Currently there are 10 UK prime contractor companies deployed as on Operation Telic providing support to UK forces in areas such as food supply, communications, welfare

provision and infrastructure works. In addition the in-theatre UK forces have let around 100 contracts with local companies covering a wide range of service support type needs (water supply, generator hire, air conditioning hire, waste disposal, etc.).

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many UK troops are deployed as UN *(a)* troops and *(b)* military observers; what operations they are involved with; where they are stationed; and how many were so deployed in each of the last seven years. [175119]

Mr. Ingram: The following table sets out the approximate number of UK troops deployed as United Nations military observers and troops, the operations they were involved with and where they were stationed in each of the last seven years:

	1998		*1999*		*2000*		*2001*	
	Observers	*Troops*	*Observers*	*Troops*	*Observers*	*Troops*	*Observers*	*Troops*
UNFICYP[1] Cyprus	—	412	—	410	—	411	—	410
UNIKO[2] Kuwait	11	—	11	—	11	—	11	—
UNOMIG[3] Georgia	7	—	7	—	7	—	7	—
UNAMSIL[4] Sierra Leone	—	—	—	—	—	—	15	8
UNTAET[5] East Timor	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	—
UNMIK[6] Kosovo	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
MONUC[7] DRCongo	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
UNMEE[8] Ethiopia/Eritrea	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
UNAMA[9] Afghanistan	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
UNMIL[10] Liberia	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	18	412	18	410	18	411	38	423

	2002		*2003*		*2004*	
	Observers	*Troops*	*Observers*	*Troops*	*Observers*	*Troops*
UNFICYP[1] Cyprus	—	413	—	414	—	413
UNIKO[2] Kuwait	11	1	11	—	—	—
UNOMIG[3] Georgia	7	—	7	—	7	—
UNAMSIL[4] Sierra Leone	15	7	15	7	15	7
UNTAET[5] East Timor	2	—	—	—	—	—
UNMIK[6] Kosovo	1	—	1	—	1	—
MONUC[7] DRCongo	—	6	—	6	—	5
UNMEE[8] Ethiopia/Eritrea	1	3	1	2	1	2
IJNAMA[9] Afghanistan	1	—	1	—	1	—
UNMIL[10] Liberia	—	—	—	3	—	3
TOTAL	38	430	36	433	25	430

[1] UK contribution to UNFICYP commenced in 1964
[2] UK contribution to UNIKOM mission commenced in October 1999 and completed in October 2003
[3] UK contribution to UNMOIG commenced in August 1993
[4] UK contribution to UNAMSIL mission commenced October 2002
[5] UK contribution to UNTAET mission commenced October 1999 and completed in April 2002
[6] UK contribution to UNMIK mission commenced in June 2001
[7] MONUC commenced November 1999
[8] UK contribution to UNMEE commenced in June 2000
[9] UK contribution to UNAMA mission commenced December 2002 and completed in January 2004
[10] UK contribution to UNMIL mission commenced September 2003

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* attack helicopters, *(b)* engineering units and *(c)* field hospitals his Department is contributing to UN operations; and how many of each it contributed in each of the last seven years. [175120]

Mr. Ingram: For each of the last seven years the United Kingdom has contributed a 13 person engineering detachment to support the UK element of UNFICYP in Cyprus. The UK has not contributed any attack helicopters or field hospitals to United Nations operations in the last seven years.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much training his Department provides to *(a)* troops and *(b)* military observers participating in UN missions; and if he will make a statement. [175121]

Mr. Ingram: Prior to deployment on United Nations missions the Ministry of Defence provides its troops with three training packages; general country awareness (briefings on culture, media awareness, etc.), mandatory skills (training in negotiation, mediation, observation reporting and public order) and a group training exercise which simulates dealing with violations of a UN mandate.

Prior to deployment on UN missions MOD provides its UN military observers with a two week training package; which includes: operations awareness briefing, intelligence briefing, theatre hand-over, cultural awareness, language training, personal health and safety (mine awareness, stress management), off-road four wheel driving, environmental health, conduct after capture, use of interpreters, negotiation and mediation.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Recycling Rates

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the recycling rates of each local authority are, listed in descending order. [175033]

Mr. Morley: A table listing the percentage of household waste recycled and composted by each local authority in England in 2002–02 (the most recent year for which data is available) will be placed in the Library of the House.

Air Quality

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the air quality rates were in *(a)* Portsmouth, *(b)* Southampton and *(c)* rural Hampshire in each of the last three years. [174194]

Mr. Morley: The following table contains the annual mean concentrations of ozone, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, sulphur dioxide and particles (PM_{10}) at Portsmouth, Southampton, rural East Sussex and rural Oxfordshire. Defra does not monitor air quality in rural Hampshire. These data are available on the National Air Quality Information Archive on the internet (www.airquality.co.uk).

The table also shows the number of days of moderate air pollution or worse at the four sites. Pollution at each site on each day is defined according to the pollutant that is in the highest band during that day.

Annual mean concentrations at automatic monitoring stations (micrograms per metre cubed)

Site	*Ozone*	*Nitrogen dioxide*	*Carbon monoxide (milligrams per metre cubed)*	*Sulphur dioxide*	*PM_{10} (Gravimetric Equivalent)*	*Number of days of moderate air pollution or worse*
Portsmouth						
2001	[1]—	28	—	3	23	3
2002	—	26	0.2	3	23	0
2003	52	26	0.2	6	24	55
Southampton						
2001	34	38	0.6	8	26	20
2002	37	33	0.4	6	26	11
2003	40	36	0.6	6	28	48
Lullington Heath (rural East Sussex						
2001	57	12.6	—	2.9	—	53
2002	55	10.8	—	2.5	—	41
2003	63	12.5	—	3.3	—	100
Harwell (rural Oxfordshire)						
2001	49	17.1	—	3.1	19	42
2002	51	14.6	—	2.3	17	36
2003	60	15.8	—	3.6	20	90

[1] Pollutant not measured at this site.

Ancient Trees

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will create a new designation of historic tree to protect ancient and historic trees from destruction. [173943]

Keith Hill: I have been asked to reply.

The Government have no plans to amend environmental protection or planning legislation to create such a new designation. The on-going review of heritage protection is focusing on the reform of existing designations.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what strategies her Department *(a)* applies and *(b)* intends to apply for the protection of ancient and historic trees. [173944]

Keith Hill: I have been asked to reply.

Ancient and historic trees enjoy some measure of statutory protection under legislation relating to tree preservation orders, woodland protection, nature conservation and historic landscapes. Under the biodiversity strategy for England, incentives such as the Forestry Commission's Woodland Grant Scheme are being refined to encourage the restoration and sustainable management of ancient woodlands.

Asbestos

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the costs to the farming industry of implementing the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002 in each of the next 10 years. [176642]

Jane Kennedy: I have been asked to reply.

The total cost of the package of amendments to the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations brought in in 2002 was estimated to have a total present value of £1.7 billion in the 50 years 2000–50. The vast majority of this, £1.5 billion, is the estimated total present value cost of implementing the new regulation 4, the duty to manage asbestos in non-domestic premises.

The Regulatory Impact Assessment for the new duty to manage estimated the undiscounted cost to the agricultural industry over the first 10 years after

implementation to be £41 million in the first year, £33 million in the second year, £31 million in each of the subsequent four years, and £1 million in each of the final four years (valued in 2000 prices). There are approximately 163,540 agricultural premises in Great Britain.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what advice she has given to farmers on identifying materials containing asbestos in premises under their control. [176648]

Jane Kennedy: I have been asked to reply.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has worked with representatives of the farming community, including the National Farmers Union (NFU) and the Rural, Agricultural and Allied Workers section of the TGWU, on asbestos related issues through the Health in Agriculture Group, which was set up in 1997.

Guidance on asbestos is included in the HSE guide to health and safety on farms 'Farmwise'. HSE also commented on NFU's specific guidance on asbestos.

Climate Change

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the impact of climate change on the quantities of water that may be sustainably abstracted over the next 50 years, broken down by region. [168370]

Mr. Morley: I refer the hon. Member to the Answer given to her on 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 161W.

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the concept of contraction and convergence as the basis for international negotiations on climate change beyond 2010. [172936]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 18 May 2004]*: On the one hand, the contraction and convergence framework promises both global participation in efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and a means of ensuring that greenhouse gas concentrations are stabilised in the atmosphere at a level that avoids dangerous climate change. On the other hand, it requires upfront agreement on the level at which greenhouse gas concentrations should be stabilised, something that many countries are reluctant to discuss; it is based on a per-capita approach which a number of countries with high per capita emissions strongly oppose, and requires a governance structure that binds countries in for decades. The UK remains open to discussing the relative merits of the contraction and convergence approach with other countries and stakeholders, along with other approaches.

Correspondence

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will obtain a reply to the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton from the Food Standards Agency regarding Mr. and Mrs. P. Acton, as promised in her letter dated 28 April. [177433]

Alun Michael: The letter referred to by the right hon. Member concerned European Rules on vitamin and mineral supplements which is a matter for the Department of Health. The letter was transferred to the Food Standards Agency on 28 April and the right hon. Member was informed that the transfer had taken place. It is not appropriate for me to comment on when a response will be sent by Department of Health.

Countryside Access

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what steps her Department is taking to facilitate access to open countryside; [175964]

(2) how much money has been allocated to the opening up of the countryside in each of the last 10 years; [175965]

(3) how much funding her Department plans to allocate to facilitate access to open countryside under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000; [175966]

(4) what additional grants will be made to local authorities for implementation of new Part 1 access under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. [175967]

Alun Michael: Defra is working with a wide range of organisations to ensure that people will enjoy the full benefits of the new right of access introduced by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The first two regions, the South East and lower North West, open for access on 19 September.

We are looking in detail with the Countryside Agency, Ordnance Survey and other bodies closely involved in the implementation of the new right at ways to make information about the Act widely available to the public. As part of our communications strategy, the Countryside Agency will very shortly be issuing guidance to access authorities (National Park Authorities in National Parks and local highway authorities elsewhere) and land managers on the use of signs.

The guidance will give access authorities the lead role in erecting and maintaining signs to show where open access rights exist and will encourage them to consult widely with land managers, local access forums and other interested parties in drawing up their plans. New signs will not be needed in every case and the guidance will advocate careful thought about whether additional signage is appropriate. The Countryside Agency will also be issuing a new and up-to-date Countryside Code on 12 July. Ordnance Survey is preparing to show access land on its Explorer maps.

Defra is funding the Countryside Agency, National Park Authorities and the Planning Inspectorate to implement Part 1 of the Act. The Countryside Agency has so far spent £29.30 million, consisting of £0.75 million in 1999–2000; £0.92 million in 2000–01; £5.17 million in 2001–02; £8.30 million in 2002–03; £13.25 million in 2003–04; and £0.77 million to date in 2004–05. The Agency expects to spend a further £14.23 million in the current financial year. National Park Authorities have been allocated an additional £4.725 million, consisting of £0.875 million in 2002–03;

£2.0 million in 2003–04; and £1.85 million in 2004–05. We have also funded the Planning Inspectorate to deal with appeals against the inclusion of land on provisional maps and restriction appeals: £0.11 million in 2001–02; £0.84 million in 2002–03 and £1.20 million in 2003–04. The Planning Inspectorate expect to spend no more than £2 million in the current financial year. Local authorities have been funded to establish local access forums under Part V of the Act.

Further, I have announced funding of £2 million for 2004–05 towards an access management grant scheme to support local authorities in implementing the new right of access. The scheme, which will be administered by the Countryside Agency, will contribute towards access authorities' preparatory planning costs and cover between 50 per cent. and 75 per cent. of the cost of new infrastructure work agreed with the Agency, such as signage, foot bridges and gates. It will give highest priority to especially sensitive nature conservation sites where effective management will avoid the need for a legal restriction to be placed on access, but will also fund management measures on sites outside nature conservation areas.

The scheme runs to the end of March 2005 and I will be considering whether to extend it in the light of its success this year and in the context of Defra's future spending priorities. Interim guidance about how the scheme will work has been available since April. The Agency will issue final guidance in early June.

The Government will allocate sufficient resources in future years to ensure the successful implementation of the new right of access under the Act.

Dairy Farmers

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what additional assistance she plans to give to dairy farmers; and if she will make a statement. [163524]

Alun Michael: UK dairy farmers already benefit from aid under the CAP worth around £2 billion for the EU. This will include for the first time, from this year, direct payments to dairy farmers, in addition to market support measures.

The Government are also taking action in line with their Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food to facilitate industry action to address the causes of low farmgate prices and to adapt to the new conditions created by the reformed CAP. For example:

my noble friend Lord Whitty has been chairing meetings of a Dairy Supply Chain Forum, which has been looking at collaborative solutions to improve supply chain efficiency, as well as other issues.

The Government have made a grant of nearly £0.5 million to the Food Chain Centre to examine how to improve dairy supply chain efficiency; and

we have established English Food and Farming Partnerships to encourage co-operation and collaboration across all agricultural sectors.

Dee Estuary (Dredging)

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what role her Department has in decisions on dredging in the Dee estuary. [176069]

Mr. Morley: Regulatory control of dredging in the Dee is the responsibility of both the Department for Transport and the Environment Agency.

The Department licenses the disposal at sea of dredged materials under the Food and Environment Protection Act 1985. Responsibility for licensing in Welsh waters is devolved to the Welsh Assembly Government to which my officials provide advice.

Departmental Administration Budget

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress has been made towards the five per cent. reduction in real terms in her Department's administration budget by 2008 announced by the Chancellor in the House on 17 March, *Official Report*, column 331. [176510]

Alun Michael: The real terms reduction of 5 per cent. or more will be a central feature of the public spending settlements for 2006 -8 to be announced in detail later this year.

Departmental Staff

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many staff were employed in the Department to work in the communications field, and what the total expenditure on communications for the Department was, broken down by *(a)* Government Information and Communication Service staff and *(b)* other staff, broken down by (i) press officers, (ii) special advisers and (iii) others, in (A) 1994–95, (B) 1996–97, (C) 1997–98 and (D) 2001–02. [168676]

Alun Michael: Defra was formed in June 2001. Information on the numbers employed in communications work in the Departments that previously dealt with Defra's policies and activities could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

The costs for 2001–02 are not retained in the manner requested by the question, however the total cost of staff and related expenditure for the Communications Directorate of the Department was £5.0 million. The staff costs and related non-pay running costs of the press office was £1.7 million.

The total number of staff engaged at the mid-point of the year was 149, of which approximately 70 were communications professionals. 27 staff (inclusive of support staff) were in the press office. The remainder of the staff were employed in marketing, internal communications, new media, strategic planning, publication and print, library and translations, business support, finance and purchasing.

The Special Advisers' Code of Conduct sets out the sort of work a special adviser may undertake on behalf of their Minister. This includes communications activity. Details of the costs of special advisers are given on an annual basis.

Electric Shock Collars

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent evidence she has received on the effects of electric shock collars; and what action she intends to take. [177138]

Mr. Bradshaw: We have recently received a report from the Kennel Club which is currently being evaluated by Defra veterinarians.

Energy Efficiency

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what budget she provided to fund the Carbon Trust in *(a)* 2002–03, *(b)* 2003–04 and *(c)* 2004–05, expressed in April 2004 money. [173465]

Mr. Morley: Defra funding of the Carbon Trust in each year (rounded to the nearest £ million), converted to 2004–05 money using HM Treasury GDP Deflator was as follows.

	£ million
2002–03	29
2003–04	53

The Carbon Trust's outturn for 2004–05 will not be known until after the end of the current financial year, but they have been offered Defra grant funding of about £60 million.

The Carbon Trust receives funding from the Climate Change Levy via Defra for England and via separate relationships with the devolved Administrations. The Carbon Trust Defra budget included end-year-flexibility of £6 million in 2002–03, £7 million in 2003–04 and £16 million in 2004–05.

Farm Production

Mr. Blizzard: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her estimate is of the total amount of plastic waste generated by farming for each of the last three years; and what methods were used to dispose of it. [174470]

Mr. Morley: The Biffaward report, "Toward Sustainable Agricultural Waste Management" (2001), estimates that 109,000 tonnes a year of plastic arises as waste in the agricultural sector (England and Wales). The Agricultural Waste Survey (2003) indicates that most agricultural waste is currently disposed of on-farm by open burning, by burial or disposal in "farm dumps". The report and survey referred to are available on the Environment Agency's website at: www.environment-agency.gov.uk

The Government propose to consult later in the summer on the draft Regulations necessary to repeal section 75(7)*(c)* of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and to apply to agricultural waste the controls already in place to comply with the Waste Framework Directive and the Landfill Directive (England and Wales). The consultation paper will also discuss the options for dealing with the recovery of non-packaging plastic waste from the agricultural sector—including the continuation of the existing local voluntary schemes or the introduction of a national voluntary or statutory producer responsibility scheme. Plastic packaging waste from the agricultural sector is already the subject of the Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations 1997 (as amended).

Flooding/Coastal Erosion

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) how many properties were protected against flood risk in the flood risk areas in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; and how many have been so protected in 2004–05 to date; [176414]

(2) how many properties were protected from coastal erosion from an eroding frontage in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; and how many have been so protected in 2004–05 to date. [176415]

Mr. Morley: Defra's Service Delivery Agreement (SDA) target 27 includes reducing flood and coastal erosion risk to some 80,000 houses between April 2003 and March 2006. Houses are counted when risk reduction is actually in place, either on completion of the project or on completion of a phase within it. This method of counting was introduced with the SDA target in March 2003. I am able to provide the outturn figure for SDA 27 for 2003–04 only, which is a total of some 20,000 houses.

The figure of 20,000 is a total for both flooding and coastal erosion risk. Of these houses, just over 1,300 have benefited from works carried out by local authorities wholly or in part to protect against coastal erosion as well as flooding from the sea, of which some 365 are identified as benefiting primarily from reduction of coastal erosion risk. It is possible that some of these 365 also benefit from reduction of flood risk.

I regret I am unable to provide figures for 2002–03 or 2004–05 to date on the same rigorous counting basis without incurring disproportionate cost. However, the progressive 2004–05 outturn will be published on the Defra website (http://www.defra.gov.uk/environ/fcd/policy/aim.htm) during the year, with the first update expected in October.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she will announce the indication priority score for coastal defence schemes for 2006–07. [176416]

Mr. Morley: In order to qualify for Defra grant, proposals must meet fundamental economic, technical and environmental criteria and achieve the threshold priority score for the year in which they are to begin. I announced an indicative threshold score of 10 for 2006–07 in April. This indicative threshold is subject to possible change in the light of firmer information on funding and authorities' plans for works nationally. I hope to announce any such change later this year.

Defra is willing to consider projects now for approval to start in 2006–07 against the indicative threshold of 10 and, although there is no guarantee we will be able to fund them before 2006–07, it may be possible to bring individual approved projects forward depending on availability of funds in-year. Changes to the threshold will not affect projects which have already been approved.

Hazardous Waste

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many applications have been received for separate cells for hazardous waste in trade landfill sites; what the expected

capacity for hazardous waste is at each of these sites; what the location is of each of these sites; and when she expects each of these to be available to receive hazardous waste. [175637]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 25 May 2004]:* Up to 21 May, the Environment Agency has received 38 applications for stable, non-reactive hazardous waste cells—separate cells—at non-hazardous waste landfills. This number may increase as further tranches of permit applications are received by the Agency, depending on operators' decisions. All such sites are merchant landfill sites. Two applications have been refused, two have been granted and one application has been withdrawn.

Final figures for the estimated capacities are not yet available as not all application contained sufficient detail for this to be assessed. The two permitted sites have an annual capacity of 57,500 tonnes.

The following table indicates the known location and operator for each of the 38 sites for which applications have been received and the status of each application.

Application	*Site name*	*Location*	*Operator*	*Status*
1	Seaton Meadows	Teeside, Middlesbrough	Able UK	Pending
2	Lillyhall Phase 3	Distington, Cumbria	Alco Waste Management	Permit issued
3	Arpley Landfill	Warrington, Cheshire	3C waste	Pending
4	Risley Landfill	Warrington, Cheshire	Biffa Waste Services Ltd.	Pending
5	Aycliffe Quarry East	Newton Aycliffe, Middlesbrough	Stonegrave Aggregates Ltd.	Application refused
6	Pilsworth North Landfill	Bury, Manchester	Viridor Waste Management Ltd.	Permit issued
7	Lord St. Helens	St. Helens, Lancashire	Cory Environmental	Application for separate cell for stable non-reactive waste withdrawn
8	Dimmer Landfill	Dimmer Landfill, Dimmer Lane, Castle Cary, Somerset, BA7 7NR	Wyvern Waste	Application refused
9	Poundbottom	Forest Road, Redlych, Salisbury, Wiltshire	CSG Group Ltd.	Pending
10	Candles Landfill Site	1 Dog Lane, New Works, Telford, Shropshire	Onyx Landfill	Pending
11	Chelson Meadow	Chelson Meadow Landfill, The Ride, Plymstock, Plymouth, Devon, PL6 7JA	Plymouth County Council	Pending
12	Ling Hall	Warwickshire	Onyx Landfill	Pending
13	Bletchley Landfill Site	Newton Longville, Bucks	Shanks	Pending
14	Elvaston Landfill Site	Shardlow, Derbyshire	Biffa Waste Services Ltd.	Pending
15	Weldon Landfill Site	Weldon, Northants	Shanks and McEwan Ltd.	Pending
16	Dogsthorpe Landfill Site	Dogsthorpe, Peterborough	Shanks Midlands Ltd.	Pending
17	Middlemarsh	Skegness, Lincs	Waste Recycling Group	Pending
18	Calvert Landfill Site	Calvert, Bucks	Shanks	Pending
19	Dorket Head Quarry Landfill	Notts	Waste Recycling Group	Pending
20	Erin Landfill Site	Chesterfield, Derbyshire	Viridor	Pending
21	North Herts Landfill Site	Hitchin, Herts	Biffa Waste Services Ltd.	Pending
22	Packington Landfill	Litle Packington, Warks	SITA	Pending
23	Sidegate Landfill Site	Wellingborough, Northants	SITA	Pending
24	Masons Landfill	Suffolk	Viridor	Pending
25	Wangford	Suffolk	Viridor	Pending
26	Bilsthorpe Quarry	Brailworth Road, Bilsthorpe, Notts	Waste Recycling Ltd.	Pending
27	Wyrley Grove Landfill	Gorsey Lane, Pelshall, Walsall, Staffs	Cleansing Service Group	Pending
28	Vigo Utopia	Coppice Lane, Walsall Wood, Walsall, West Mids	Gory Environmental Ltd.	Pending
29	Boston	Boston, Lincs	Waste Recycling Ltd.	Pending
30	Ardley Landfill	Ardley Landfill, Ardley Quarry Southern Extension, Ardley Fields Farm, Ardley, Oxfordshire, OX6 9PH	Viridor Waste Management Ltd.	Pending
31	Deepmoor	High Bullen, St. Giles in the Wood, Torrington, Devon, EX38 7JA	Devon Waste Management Ltd.	Pending
32	Connon Bridge	East Taphouse, Liskard, Cornwall, PL14 4NP	County Environmental Services Ltd.	Pending
33	Blue Haze	Blue Haze Landfill, Somerley, Ringwood, Hants	Onyx Landfill Ltd.	Pending
34	Beacon Hill	Beacon Hill, Wareham Road, Corfe Mullen	SITA Products and Services Ltd.	Pending
35	Granville	Granville/Woodhouse Landfill, Grange Lane, St. Georges, Telford, Shropshire, TF2 9PB	Shropshire Waste management Ltd.	Pending
36	Himley Wood	Himley Quarry, Oak Lane, Kingswinford, Dudley, West Midlands, DY6 7LP	Cory Environmental (Central) Ltd.	Pending
37	Pebsham	Freshfields, Bexhill Road, St. Leonards-on-Sea, Nr. Hastings, East Sussex, Tn38 8AY	Biffa Waste Services Ltd.	Pending
38	Horton	Horton Landfill Site, Small Dole, West Sussex, BN5 9XH	Viridor Waste Management Ltd.	Pending

The Environment Agency is in discussion with the major waste companies in England and Wales to seek to agree a way forward in the use of separate landfill cells as a key part of the solution for hazardous waste, following the co-disposal ban in July.

Home Energy Efficiency

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many homes in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood have

benefited from the Home Energy Efficiency and Warm Front Schemes. [176401]

Mr. Morley: The Home Energy Efficiency Scheme is now marketed as Warm Front. Between the launch of the scheme in June 2000 and the end of March 2004, approximately 4,500 households in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood received assistance from the Scheme.

Landfill

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress has been made towards implementing the European Union Landfill Directive; and if she will make a statement. [174230]

Mr. Morley: With the exception of an issue linked to the infraction proceedings on the exclusion of agricultural waste from national waste controls, all requirements of the Landfill Directive have been implemented in the whole of the UK. In line with usual procedures, the European Commission has been informed of this situation.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on progress on implementing the European Union Landfill Directive. [175579]

Mr. Morley: With the exception of an issue linked to the infraction proceedings on the exclusion of agricultural waste from national waste controls, all requirements of the Landfill Directive have been implemented in the whole of the UK. In line with usual procedures, the European Commission have been informed of this situation. In addition, for England and Wales, Regulations implementing Council Decision 2003/33/EC on waste acceptance criteria were laid before Parliament on 18 May. The Council Decision expands on the Landfill Directive's requirements and must be implemented in national law by 16 July 2004.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she will publish a revised draft version of the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (England) Regulations 2003; and when the final regulations will be laid before Parliament. [173963]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 19 May 2004]:* The outcome of the consultation on the Landfill Allowances Trading Scheme was published on the Defra website (www.Defra.gov.uk) on 11 May. The intention is to lay the Regulations before Parliament in early June.

Meat Production Subsidies

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what her policy is on a reduction in subsidy level for meat production; [164226]

(2) when she will reply to the question tabled by the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South on 24 March, reference 164226, on subsidy levels. [175877]

Alun Michael: The CAP reform agreement decouples the bulk of subsidy from production, freeing up farmers to realign their businesses to meet market demands, not what subsidy regimes dictate.

Breaking the link between subsidy and production also removes an incentive for farmers to maximise production and so reduces environmental damage from intensive farming such as over-use of pesticides and fertilizers. Through cross-compliance obligations, the agreement also makes subsidy dependent on farmers meeting certain EU environmental, food safety, plant and animal health and animal welfare standards as well as maintaining their land in good agricultural and environmental condition. More subsidy will also be diverted from production to wider rural development and environmental initiatives which farmers undertake.

Milk (Lancashire)

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will take steps to retain milk processing facilities in Lancashire. [172450]

Alun Michael: The structure and location of dairy processing is a matter for individual dairy processing enterprises to determine in line with their business needs. There are currently over 100 dairy processing establishments in Lancashire, as well as many more in the adjoining counties.

Parliamentary Questions

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she will reply to the Question tabled by the hon. Member for Croydon, South on 5 May, reference 171778, on energy efficiency. [176547]

Mr. Morley: I replied to the hon. Member on 25 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1484W.

Pollution Control

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what functions local authorities discharge under the Local Authority Pollution Control Regime; and *(a)* what guidance her Department gives to and *(b)* what assessment she has made of the performance of local authorities in carrying out these functions. [175348]

Mr. Morley: Local authorities are responsible for regulating air emissions from some 17,000 industrial and other installations and regulating a wide range of environmental impacts from up to 1,000 industrial and other installations. These responsibilities involve deciding whether to issue permits to the specified installations and, if so, imposing conditions which represent the best available techniques to minimise pollution. As part of this, local authorities' functions include inspecting regulated premises and maintaining a public register.

The Department issues statutory guidance on what constitutes the best available techniques for the different sectors regulated under these regimes. We are currently reviewing the 80 air pollution control guidance notes and have issue seven guidance notes for sectors regulated for wider impacts with three more in preparation. We published last year a detailed manual on policy and procedures for these regimes. In addition, guidance is issued as the need arises to address specific

issues. Officials meet and speak regularly with local authority representative bodies and individual local authority officers to assess guidance needs.

We commissioned an independent review of the performance of local authorities in implementing these regimes last autumn and published the report earlier this month which can be found at http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/airquality/lapc/performreview0304/index.htm. Officials will be meeting with local authority representative organisations to draw up a joint action plan in response to the review recommendations.

Private Sewers

Paddy Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she intends to report on the consultation process on the W. S. Atkins report about private sewers. [175544]

Mr. Morley: Since the consultation period ended, we have analysed responses and worked with stakeholders to identify the issues which will need to be resolved before a decision on the way forward can be made. We plan to publish a Government response to the consultation in early summer.

Recycling (Plastics)

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much plastic per person was recycled in *(a)* Shrewsbury and Atcham and *(b)* England in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [175634]

Mr. Morley: The 2002-03 Municipal Waste Management Survey return completed by Shrewsbury and Atcham district council, showed no record of any collections of plastics from kerbside schemes, bring sites or private/voluntary schemes.

The same 2002-03 Municipal Waste Management Survey for England shows that 3,742,000 tonnes of household waste was recycled or composted, 13,000 tonnes (or 0.347 per cent.) of which, was plastic. Per capita figures are not recorded.

Although the figures are collected on a different basis, records show that in England, 170,915 tonnes of plastic packaging were recycled in 2003. Figures for recycling plastic packaging are not available by district council area.

Sea Walls (Essex)

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) how many miles of sea wall on the Essex coast have been improved in each of the last 20 years; [175021]

(2) what account is taken in calculating the cost of saltwater flooding of agricultural land of *(a)* the impact of saltwater on cropping, *(b)* the cost of gypsum, *(c)* the cost of digging out ditches and replacing drainage and *(d)* the cost of additional fertilisers and sprays; [175023]

(3) what estimated yield of wheat is used in calculating the land value for cost benefit analysis of the maintenance of sea walls in Essex; [175024]

(4) what the total cost is of *(a)* the Roach and Crouch Estuary Strategy study, *(b)* the Blackwater and Colne Estuary Strategy Study, *(c)* the Stour and Orwell Estuary Strategy Study, *(d)* the Coast Habitat Management Plan for Essex, *(e)* the Essex Shoreline Management Plan and *(f)* the Geomorphical Study for the Roach and Crouch Estuary. [175031]

Mr. Morley: The total length of seawalls in Essex is 275.6 miles (441km). A total of 63.77 miles has been raised and improved in the last 20 years. This equates to 23 per cent. of seawalls.

The following table details from Environment Agency data how many miles of seawall on the Essex coast have been improved in each of the last 20 years.

Financial Year	*Length raised and improved (miles)*
1984–85	8.86
1985–86	7.08
1986–87	2.17
1987–88	3.31
1988–89	1.88
1989–90	2.88
1990–91	3.50
1991–92	3.82
1992–93	4.63
1993–94	2.73
1994–95	5.30
1995–96	10.31
1996–97	3.00
1997–98	1.62
1998–99	2.06
1999–00	Nil
2000–01	Nil
2001–02	Nil
2002–03	0.62
2003–04	Nil
Total 1984–85—3003–04	63.77

Notes:
Only lengths that have been raised to improve resistance to overtopping are included. Face protection schemes are not included.
Maintenance repairs and drainage improvements are not included.
The length protected by the Colne Barrier has been included as length improved although the walls themselves are not raised.

The impact of saltwater flooding was considered in flood damage calculations. It was determined through the appraisal of the independent land valuation agent and through consultation with local land owners:

For the application of gypsum to arable land in the first year following a flood event, a cost of £109 per hectare has been used in calculations.

For desilting and digging out ditches in the first year following a flood event, a cost of £340 per hectare of arable land and grassland has been used in calculations.

For replacing drainage in the first year following a flood event, a cost of £1,111 per hectare of arable land (assuming 100 per cent. drainage) and £555 per hectare of grassland (assuming 50 per cent. drainage) has been used in calculations.

For additional fertilizers and sprays on arable land, a cost of £91 per acre of wheat land, and £85 per acre of oil seed rape land, has been used in calculations.

For additional fertilizers and sprays on grassland, a cost of £59.50 per acre has been used in calculations. However, these costs for additional fertilizers and sprays are factored into calculations incrementally, and at different rates depending on the type of land under consideration. Four years after a hypothetical flood event on arable land, 25 per cent. of the

fertiliser costs and 100 per cent. of the spray costs will have been factored in; whereas the same percentages will have been factored into calculations only two years after a hypothetical flood event on grassland.

The estimated yield of wheat has not been used in calculating the land value. The land value has been calculated by an independent Essex-based land valuation agent based on the prices received during recent land sales.

The yield of wheat has been used to calculate gross margins and flood damages and is dependent on the grade of arable land. The yield for poor/medium, good/heavy and good/ease working arable land, has been taken as 2.75, 3.50 and 3.62 tonnes per acre respectively.

As to the costs of studies, the expected total cost of those referred to is £1,450,000, broken down as follows:

Roach and Crouch Estuary Strategy study—£400,000. This includes an estimated £35,000 dedicated to the Geomorphological Study for the Roach and Crouch Estuary.

Colne and Blackwater Estuary Strategy study—£400,000.

Stour and Orwell Estuary Strategy Study—£350,000.

The Coastal Habitat Management Plan (CHAMP) for Essex formed part of a package of seven other CHAMPs (Norfolk and Suffolk, East Kent etc.)—the approximate cost for the Essex CHAMP was £50,000.

Essex Shoreline Management Plan—approximately £250,000.

Single Farm Payments

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the impact of her proposed arrangement for single farm payments on the ability of *(a)* her Department, *(b)* other Government agencies and *(c)* other local authorities or voluntary agencies to enforce effective cross-compliance of payments with agri-environmental outcomes. [157134]

Alun Michael: Officials have identified a number of enforcement bodies that could undertake inspections for relevant parts of the Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions requirements. Officials are working closely with stakeholders and these bodies to identify how these requirements will be enforced, and to reduce the burden on farmers by, where possible, linking up with current inspection practices. Final decisions on cross compliance will be taken after careful consideration of responses to the current public consultation.

Mr. Curry: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has for redefining the moorland line for purposes of the single farm payment in areas where established hay meadows lie within the moorland zone. [169466]

Alun Michael: We are currently considering how to establish a system for dealing with representations against the position of the moorland line and will make an announcement as soon as possible.

Sir Don Curry

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the role of Sir Don Curry in ensuring new entrant initiatives in farming. [169649]

Alun Michael: Sir Don Curry is Chair of the independent Implementation Group that has been set up to oversee and drive forward delivery of the Government's Sustainable Farming and Food Strategy.

As part of the Strategy, Defra has undertaken to discuss with interested stakeholders possible mechanisms to help overcome barriers to new entrants. Defra has also undertaken to work co-operatively with proposals from the NFU and the National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs in respect of advice for new entrants and mechanisms to bring together new entrants and retiring farmers.

In addition, to inform discussion of this issue, Defra has commissioned research on entry to and exit from farming in the United Kingdom, the results of which will be published in due course.

Two Tree Island

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what elements of possible contamination are leaching from the closed Two Tree Island landfill site; and in what volumes. [174237]

Mr. Morley: The Two Tree Island waste disposal site was used for landfill operations, reportedly from the 1930s until the 1980s. Investigations revealed that the site was tipped with domestic and industrial waste. Details of possible contamination and volumes of leachate are shown in the consultants' report submitted to Southend-on-Sea borough council in August 2003. As the report is owned by Southend-on-Sea borough council, queries regarding its content should be referred to the local authority.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will measure contamination in leachate emanating from the closed Two Tree Island landfill site, after prolonged heavy rainfall. [174238]

Mr. Morley: Castle Point district council and South End borough council are responsible for monitoring any leachate from the Two Tree Island landfill site.

Waste Water

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what information she has procured to establish the levels of residue from anti-depressant drugs in waste water which has passed through sewage-treatment plants. [167862]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 23 April 2004]:* The Environment Agency carried out a desk based ranking exercise during 2003 on the 500 pharmaceuticals most commonly used in England and Wales in order to prioritise which ones may be of environmental significance.

The top ranked antidepressant from the prioritisation exercise was lofepramine and this was included in a subsequent targeted monitoring survey carried out by

the Environment Agency in association with the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS).

The results of this monitoring programme are set out in the Research and Development Report P6-012/6, "Targeted Monitoring Programme for Pharmaceuticals in the Aquatic Environment". This report is in the public domain and will be made available to the Library of the House.

The Environment agency has also developed a position statement on pharmaceuticals, which can be found on the Environment Agency's website www.environment-agency.gov.uk.

Water Charges

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has had with Ofwat on future water charges. [176064]

Mr. Morley: Ministers from this Department meet the Director General of Water Services from time to time to discuss water industry issues.

The Director General has sole responsibility for setting price limits for the water industry.

Waterways

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures she has taken to ensure that strategic plans are prepared for each navigable canal or inland waterway; and if she will make a statement. [176635]

Alun Michael: The three Government-sponsored navigation authorities—British Waterways, the Environment Agency and the Broads Authority—have all prepared strategic plans for the management of their waterways in consultation with Defra. The Government encourages the smaller, independent navigation authorities to prepare similar plans for their waterways.

TREASURY

Customs and Excise

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many Customs and Excise investigators there *(a)* were immediately prior to July 2003 and *(b)* have been since July 2003. [176425]

John Healey: As Mr. Justice Butterfield reported In his "Review of Criminal Investigation and Prosecutions Conducted by HM Customs and Excise", published in July 2003, Customs had about 2,500 investigators in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. At the end of April 2004, Customs had around 2,400 investigators, although fluctuations in headcount can result from the movement of investigation staff internally, into and out of Intelligence disciplines, and externally to and from other agencies.

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many hours of refresher training Customs and Excise investigators *(a)* were scheduled to receive prior to July 2003 and *(b)* have been scheduled to receive since July 2003; [176423]

(2) how many Customs and Excise investigators *(a)* completed refresher training in each of the three years prior to July 2003 and *(b)* have completed such training since July 2003. [176424]

John Healey: While praising some aspects of their training for investigators, Mr. Justice Butterfield identified in his "Review of Criminal Investigations and Prosecutions Conducted by HM Customs and Excise" that Customs did not have in place a planned programme of refresher training. When his review was published on 15 July 2003, I announced that the Government had accepted his recommendation that such a programme should be developed, along with his other recommendations for Customs' Law Enforcement service.

Since then, Customs have developed a full refresher training programme, comprising seven modules lasting a total of 167 hours, which they are subjecting to external accreditation through the national training organisation, Skills for Justice. Delivery of this training began in March 2004, and over 300 investigators will complete this programme each year.

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what procedures have been introduced since July 2003 to handle and manage human sources in Customs and Excise investigations; [176427]

(2) what procedures have been implemented since July 2003 to ensure that Customs and Excise personnel retain adequate records when dealing with sources in Customs and Excise investigations. [176428]

John Healey: Following Mr. Justice Butterfield's "Review of Criminal Investigations and Prosecution Conducted by HM Customs and Excise", published on 15 July 2003, Customs and Excise introduced a new policy for dealing with the receipt and management of information from human sources, which came into operation on 1 September 2003. 'HumInt' is the generic term applied to all persons who give information to Customs relating to a possible criminal offence, including any offences that may ultimately be dealt with under 'civil' provisions, or any regulatory breach. Customs' HumInt policy is outlined in general terms in paragraphs 10.88 onwards of the Butterfield review.

The HumInt policy requires all officers of Customs and Excise, not just investigators, on receipt of information from a HumInt to record and retain the information in a durable and retrievable format and to lodge both the details of the HumInt and the information with a central unit. That unit, is responsible for creating an electronic central register both of the HumInt and of the information received. It is also responsible for assessing the information received to decide on categorisation, handling and dissemination requirements.

The policy and the associated guidance have been promulgated to every officer in the Department through its intranet site, supported by an initial programme of awareness events. HumInt training modules are now incorporated in all core training across the Department. The HumInt policy includes direction and guidance regarding the material to be recorded and the need for retention in a durable and retrievable format of original notes in relation to dealings with HumInt. Compliance with the requirements of the HumInt policy forms an integral part of Customs' assurance programmes.

Employment (Blackpool, North and Fleetwood)

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the level of unemployment was in each year since 1997 in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood. [176400]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mrs. Joan Humble, dated 7 June 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about unemployment. I am replying in his absence. (176400)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. However, the LFS sample size is too small to give reliable estimates of unemployment in the Blackpool North & Fleetwood Constituency.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for local areas including parliamentary constituencies.

The table below gives the annual average number of JSA claimants for the Blackpool North & Fleetwood constituency for each year since 1997.

JSA claimants in the Blackpool, North and Fleetwood constituency—annual averages 1997 to 2003

	Average annual claimants
1997	2,489
1998	2,092
1999	1,913
2000	1,807
2001	1,701
2002	1,493
2003	1,365

EU Budget

Mr. Spring: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the average net contributions of each EU member state to the EU budget since 1995. [176674]

Ruth Kelly: Based on data published by the European Commission, the indicative net contributions of each member state over the period 1995 to 2002, the latest year for which information is currently available, are set out in the following table:

Member state	*Average net contribution 1995 to 2002 (€ million)*
Belgium	-1,120.0
Denmark	37.1
Germany	10,330.8
Greece	-4,038.7
Spain	-6,617.4
France	1,446.8
Ireland	-1,904.8
Italy	1,467.6
Luxembourg	-712.0
The Netherlands	2,845.5
Austria	625.5
Portugal	-2,499.6
Finland	57.4
Sweden	1,051.4
United Kingdom	3,878.2

Note:
A minus sign indicates a net beneficiary.
Source:
Based on information on member states' contributions and receipts published in European Commission Reports on the allocation of EU operating expenditure.

Alf Allington Informant Record

Norman Lamb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 146W, on Customs and Excise, whether the receipt of the copy of the general briefing about the review of the London City Bond-related cases was the first occasion on which the Economic Secretary was informed of the existence of the Alf Allington informant record. [176697]

John Healey: Yes.

Education Spending

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what measures the Office of National Statistics uses to measure the productivity of education spending. [170727]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Mark Hoban, dated 7 June 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning what measures the Office of National Statistics uses to measure the productivity of education spending. (170727)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) published an indicative estimate of productivity change for government as a whole in an article in Economic Trends, July 2003. At present, this estimate does not meet all the criteria to be a National Statistic and was published as an experimental statistic rather than a regular series.

ONS has also stated that a productivity analysis would be published at function level as soon as the quality of the data warrant it. That point has not yet been reached. As a result, ONS does not yet publish a measure of education productivity.

ONS recognises that in recent years there have been increased demands on, and expectations of, measures of government output. The Atkinson Review was set up in December 2003 to advance methodologies in measuring government activities, including productivity. It is due to produce a preliminary report in July 2004 and a final report by January 2005.

Government Expenditure (Wales)

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total Government expenditure on Wales was through *(a)* the Welsh Block and *(b)* other funding streams in each of the last 10 years. [177352]

Mr. Boateng: Identifiable public spending by function, region and country is published annually in "Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses". Table 8.14 of "Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2004" (Cm 6201) shows a functional breakdown for identifiable expenditure in Wales for 2002–03, the latest year for which data are available, apportioned between the National Assembly for Wales, local authorities and UK Government Departments. Data on identifiable spending in Wales for previous years are published in previous editions of "Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses."

Greenhouse Gases Statistics

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer for what reason statistics relating to increases in greenhouse gases from the transport sector were removed from the recent Office of National Statistics report on the environment. [177225]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Norman Baker, dated 7 June 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question on the removal of information from the ONS Environmental Accounts (177225).

The information on greenhouse gas emissions from transport were not removed from the ONS Environmental Accounts report published on 20 May 2004. The report was never altered from the version originally prepared by professional statisticians within ONS, and is publicly available on the National Statistics website.

The focus of the accompanying News Release changed during drafting, as there were some unresolved statistical concerns over the reconciliation of road freight emissions figures using alternative definitions. Given these concerns, it was decided that it would not be appropriate for the News Release to focus upon

transport emissions as had been intended. This decision was taken independently by senior government statisticians, as a matter of professional judgement.

The circumstances surrounding this decision are explained in a letter that I sent to David Rowlands (Permanent Secretary of the Department for Transport) on 28 May. This letter is available on the website of the Statistics Commission at: http://www.statscom.org.uk/media_pdfs/correspondence/letter0189.pdf

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps he takes to ensure that his policy that reports produced by the Office for National Statistics are not subject to political interference is upheld in respect of representations from the Department for Transport. [177226]

Ruth Kelly: Reports produced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) are not subject to political interference. All statistics published by ONS are prepared in accordance with the "Framework for National Statistics", published in June 2000. This places an obligation on official statisticians:

"to improve public confidence in official statistics by demonstrating that they are free from political interference".

As the Minister responsible for National Statistics, I fully support the principles set out in the 'Framework' document.

The final responsibility for the content form and timing of the publication of National Statistics, for which the ONS is responsible for, is the Director of ONS. Were Ministers to be consulted by him on any such matters, which is rare, then it would be through the National Statistics protocol on consultation.

ONS publishes some statistics where the components draw on the expertise of statisticians from the Government Statistical Service, who work in other Departments. It is not unusual for them to be asked to review how statistics that they have expertise in will be reported. These statisticians operate under the National Statistics Code of Practise.

The National Statistician, who is Director of the ONS, has released his own correspondence confirming that it was the advice of a senior statistician in the Transport Department which led to his senior staff deciding to change the press release which summarised the content of the Environmental Account being published by ONS. No changes were made to the substantive reports as a result of this exchange. Both the published and withdrawn versions are discoverable.

The assertion that ONS has been subject to political interference is contradicted by the very process applied by ONS.

Legal Aid

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his policy is towards the payment of money from public funds in satisfaction of an award of legal aid to an individual *(a)* who appears on the UN list of suspected terrorists and *(b)* whose assets in the UK have been frozen pursuant to a decision of the G7 on the grounds that the individual is suspected of terrorism; and if he will make a statement. [169168]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 28 April 2004]:* The Government considers all such applications in line with its international obligations under UN Security Council Resolution 1452, and EC regulation 881/2002, which enforces that Resolution in the EU.

Military Support Vehicles

Richard Burden: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the value to the UK economy of the Ministry of Defence contract for the manufacture and supply of military support vehicles. [177459]

Mr. Boateng: The MOD is carefully evaluating the tenders submitted on the support vehicle programme. The Defence Secretary will consult me and other colleagues when this evaluation is complete. In line with our Defence Industrial Policy, the way forward on the project will be informed by a number of factors, including value for money for the armed forces, affordability and the wider economy of the UK.

Ministerial Visits

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list visits made by each Minister in the Department between December 2003 and April 2004, broken down by *(a)* date, *(b)* constituency visited and *(c)* cost. [171570]

Ruth Kelly: The Government publishes on an annual basis the total costs of all ministerial overseas travel and a list of all visits by Cabinet Ministers costing in excess of £500. Information for 2003–04 is currently being collected will be published as soon as it is ready. Domestic visits on official departmental business between December 2003 and April 2004 are listed in the following table.

All travel is undertaken fully in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

Date	*Constituency*	*Cost (£)*
Chancellor of the Exchequer		
18 March 2004	North East Milton Keynes	26
26 March 2004	Manchester, Central	321
5 April 2004	Poplar and Canning Town	No cost
Chief Secretary to the Treasury		
15 December 2003	Holborn and St. Pancras	No cost
18 December 2003	West Ham	No cost
11–12 January 2004	Warrington South, Preston	817
25–27 January 2004	West Aberdeen and Kincardine; Edinburgh, East and Musselburgh	1,477
8–9 February 2004	Belfast, East, Belfast, South	586
16 April 2004	Dover	46
18–19 April 2004	Blaenau Gwent; Islwyn	470
25–26 April 04	Copeland	534
Financial Secretary to the Treasury		
11 December 2003	Stafford	374
Economic Secretary to the Treasury		
15 December 2003	City of Durham	479
29 January 2004	Leeds, Central	405
23 February 2004	Dumbarton; Clydebank and Milngavie	728
8 March 2004	Selby	452
Paymaster General		
13 January 2004	Cities of London and Westminster	No cost
19–20 January 2004	Aberdeen, Central	1,110

Mortality Statistics

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of deaths were due to *(a)* respiratory disease, *(b)* heart disease and *(c)* cancer in each of the last three years. [176882]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mrs. Iris Robinson, dated 7 June 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what percentage of deaths were due to *(a)* respiratory disease, *(b)* heart disease and *(c)* cancer in each of the last three years. I am replying in his absence. (176882)

The latest year for which data are available is 2002. Figures for all respiratory diseases, all circulatory diseases including ischaemic heart disease (otherwise known as coronary heart disease), and cancer are shown in the attached table for each year from 2000 to 2002.

Percentage of all deaths per calendar year by underlying cause of death[1] and total number of deaths, England and Wales, 2000 to 2002[2]

Percent, number of deaths

Calendar year	*2000*	*2001[3]*	*2002[3]*
(a) Respiratory diseases	17.3	72.7	13.1
Circulatory diseases including	38.7	39.9	39.3
(b) Ischaemic heart disease	20.2	20.0	19.3
(c) Cancer	25.2	26.2	26.3
All deaths (= 100 per cent.)	535,664	530,373	533,527

[1] The cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) for the year 2000, and the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) for 2001 and 2002.

The codes used are listed:

Diseases of the respiratory system—ICD-9 460–519; ICD-10 J00-J99

Diseases of the circulatory system—ICD-9 390–459; ICD-10 I00-I99;

Ischaemic heart disease—ICD-9 410–414; ICD-10120–125;

Neoplasm's—ICD-9 140–239; ICD-10 C00-D48.

[2] Figures are based on deaths occurring in each calendar year.

[3] The introduction of ICD-10 for coding cause of death in 2001 means that data for respiratory diseases, circulatory diseases and cancer are not completely comparable with data for years before this date. The data should therefore be interpreted with caution. The effect of the change in classification in 2001 on deaths from these causes is described in a report published in May 2002[1] and a more detailed analysis of the impact of ICD-10 in trends in circulatory disease mortality was published in May 2004[2].

Sources:

[1] Office for National Statistics. Results of the ICD-10 bridge coding study, England and Wales, 1999. Health Statistics Quarterly 14 (2002), 75–83.

[2] Griffiths C, Brock A, Rooney C (2004). The impact of introducing ICD-10 on trends in mortality from circulatory diseases in England and Wales. Health Statistics Quarterly 22, 14–20.

Office of Government Commerce

Mr. Todd: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list *(a)* the Office of Government Commerce Gateway Reviews conducted since January 2001, *(b)* the dates on which the reviews were completed and *(c)* further consequential Office of Government Commerce Gateway appraisals. [173820]

Mr. Boateng: A list of OGC Gateway Reviews, conducted since 1 January 2001 and the dates on which each review was completed, excluding those projects associated with the security services (which fall within the scope of Exemption 1 *(a)* of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information) has been placed in the Library of the House.

Pensions

Sir Sydney Chapman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to change the rules relating to the purchase of annuities. [177329]

Ruth Kelly: The Government intend to retain the requirement for pension schemes to secure their retirement benefits once a member reaches age 75.

But, as part of the simplification of the pension tax rules, the Government are proposing to make the annuity rules more flexible allowing new innovative products to be developed such as limited period annuities and value protected annuities.

Also, for those people who object to annuities due to their religious beliefs, the Government are proposing to introduce an alternative way of providing an income for life—an Alternatively Secured Pension (ASP).

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Departmental Administration Budget

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what progress has been made towards the 5 per cent. reduction in real terms in the Department's administration budget by 2008, announced by the Chancellor in the House on 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 331. [176499]

Mr. Lammy: The real terms reduction of 5 per cent. or more will be a central feature of the public spending settlements for 2006–08 to be announced in detail later this year.

Freedom of Information

Llew Smith: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what decisions he has reached on the appropriate charging regime for requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. [175078]

Mr. Leslie: The Government published draft Freedom of Information fees regulations in 2000. No decision has been taken to alter these. An advisory group comprising of internal and external stakeholders is looking at options and is due to report before summer recess and a decision will be made before October. Final regulations will be brought forward by the Government in time for being in effect on 1 January 2005.

Gender Pay Gap

Mr. Denham: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment he has made of the pay gap between men and women

employed by his Department and its agencies in *(a)* Southampton, *(b)* Eastleigh, *(c)* Winchester and *(d)* Romsey. [171639]

Mr. Lammy: In response to the Equal Opportunities Task Force report "Just Pay", my Department undertook a review of equal pay in 2002–03 and drew up an action plan to address any unjustified equal pay gaps.

The review did not find significant gender pay gaps and the action plan set out proposals for reducing those gaps that were exposed. The review examined the position across the Department as a whole and did not make an assessment by individual location.

Gender Recognition Bill

Lady Hermon: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs for what reasons the provisions of the Gender Recognition Bill were extended to Northern Ireland by primary legislation rather than by way of Order in Council; and if he will make a statement. [176960]

Mr. Lammy: The Government are of the view that transsexual people across the UK should be entitled to apply for legal recognition in their acquired gender. The judgments of the European Court of Human Rights in Goodwin *v.* the UK and "I" *v.* the UK require nothing less.

In view of this the Government decided that a UK-wide approach to legislating in this area was appropriate, and the Government consulted widely in the Province, as in the rest of the UK, before legislating.

Judicial Bodies

Mr. John Taylor: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the dialogue between the Judicial Studies Board and the Sentencing Advisory Council. [176614]

Mr. Leslie: The Secretary of State is satisfied with the arrangements for dialogue between the Judicial Studies Board and the Sentencing Guidelines Council. We have recognised the importance of the link between the Sentencing Guidelines Council and the Judicial Studies Board by ensuring that the Chair of the Judicial Studies Board's Criminal Committee is ex officio a member of the Sentencing Guidelines Council. In addition there is regular contact between officials of the Judicial Studies Board and the Sentencing Guidelines Council.

Magistrates

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the average age of *(a)* male and *(b)* female magistrates in *(a)* England, *(b)* the North West, *(c)* Lancashire and *(d)* each Lancashire district is; and what the highest age of a magistrate is in each area. [177165]

Mr. Leslie: This information is not accurately available in the format requested. We are able to provide numbers of magistrates within age bands in:

(a) England (including the Duchy of Lancaster comprising the counties of Lancashire, Greater Manchester and Merseyside, and where magistrates' appointments are the responsibility of the Chancellor of the Duchy):

to age 30: 22 magistrates
30–39: 968 magistrates
40–49: 4377 magistrates
50–54: 4401 magistrates
55–59: 7343 magistrates
60–65: 7004 magistrates
66+: 2663 magistrates

(b) The North West. This region comprises Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Cheshire and Cumbria:

to age 30: 8 magistrates
30–39: 139 magistrates
40–49: 752 magistrates
50–54: 769 magistrates
55–59: 1281 magistrates
60–65: 1272 magistrates
66+: 520 magistrates

(c) Lancashire

to age 30: 1 male, 2 female magistrates
30–39: 12 male, 17 female magistrates
40–49: 91 male, 89 female magistrates
50–54: 76 male, 94 female magistrates
55–59: 166 male, 155 female magistrates
60–65: 188 male, 118 female magistrates
66+: 80 male, 51 female magistrates

(d) Each Lancashire district Blackburn, Darwen and RV

to age 30: 0 male, 1 female magistrates
30–39: 5 male, 3 female magistrates
40–49: 15 male, 8 female magistrates
50–54: 10 male, 12 female magistrates
55–59: 24 male, 14 female magistrates
60–65: 25 male, 23 female magistrates
66+: 12 male, 4 female magistrates

Blackpool and Fylde

to age 30: 0 male, 0 female magistrates
30–39: 0 male, 3 female magistrates
40–49: 17 male, 14 female magistrates
50–54:13 male, 14 female magistrates
55–59: 22 male, 35 female magistrates
60–65: 28 male, 11 female magistrates
66+: 9 male, 7 female magistrates

Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale

to age 30: 0 male, 1 female magistrates
30–39: 2 male, 2 female magistrates
40–49:14 male, 14 female magistrates
50–54: 13 male, 21 female magistrates
55–59: 32 male, 16 female magistrates
60–65: 30 male, 22 female magistrates
66+: 10 male, 11 female magistrates

conservation and historic landscapes. Under the agricultural industry over the first 10 years after

Chorley
to age 30: 0 male, 0 female magistrates
30–39: 0 male, 1 female magistrates
40–49: 3 male, 3 female magistrates
50–54: 2 male, 8 female magistrates
55–59: 14 male, 13 female magistrates
60–65: 17 male, 8 female magistrates
66+: 1 male, 3 female magistrates

Hyndburn
to age 30: 0 male, 0 female magistrates
30–39: 2 male, 0 female magistrates
40–49: 13 male, 2 female magistrates
50–54: 4 male, 2 female magistrates
55–59: 7 male, 13 female magistrates
60–65: 7 male, 6 female magistrates
66+: 9 male, 2 female magistrates

Lancaster
to age 30: 0 male, 0 female magistrates
30–39: 1 male, 0 female magistrates
40–49: 7 male, 13 female magistrates
50–54: 7 male, 9 female magistrates
55–59: 16 male, 20 female magistrates
60–65: 20 male, 21 female magistrates
66+: 7 male, 8 female magistrates

Ormskirk
to age 30: 1 male, 0 female magistrates
30–39: 0 male, 1 female magistrates
40–49: 4 male, 4 female magistrates
50–54: 3 male, 6 female magistrates
55–59: 5 male, 12 female magistrates
60–65: 11 male, 6 female magistrates
66+: 8 male, 3 female magistrates

Preston
to age 30: 0 male, 2 female magistrates
40–49: 11 male, 16 female magistrates
50–54: 16 male, 14 female magistrates
55–59: 26 male, 15 female magistrates
60–65: 29 male, 11 female magistrates
66+: 15 male, 2 female magistrates

South Ribble
to age 30: 0 male, 0 female magistrates
30–39: 0 male, 3 female magistrates
40–49: 3 male, 4 female magistrates
50–54: 6 male, 4 female magistrates
55–59: 5 male, 10 female magistrates
60–65: 11 male, 5 female magistrates
66+: 6 male, 6 female magistrates

Wyre
to age 30: 0 male, 0 female magistrates
30–39: 2 male, 2 female magistrates
40–49: 4 male, 11 female magistrates
50–54: 4 male, 4 female magistrates
55–59: 15 male, 7 female magistrates
60–65: 10 male, 5 female magistrates
66+: 3 male, 5 female magistrates

All magistrates are transferred to the Supplemental List on reaching the age of 70.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many magistrates are members of political parties, broken down by party, in *(a)* England, *(b)* the North West, *(c)* Lancashire and *(d)* each Lancashire district. [177166]

Mr. Leslie: A record is not kept of membership of political parties.

Magistrates were asked to disclose political affiliation until earlier this year, at which point the numbers broken down by party were:

	Number
(a) England	
Conservative	8,806
Labour	6,804
Liberal Democrat	3,401
Uncommitted	5,542
Other	1,449
(b) The North West (comprising Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Cheshire and Cumbria)	
Conservative	1,249
Labour	1,291
Liberal Democrat	535
Uncommitted	1,423
Other	182
(c) Lancashire	
Conservative	292
Labour	292
Liberal Democrat	90
Uncommitted	385
Other	83
(d) Each Lancashire district Blackburn, Darwen and RV	
Conservative	41
Labour	36
Liberal Democrat	12
Uncommitted	56
Other	11
Blackpool and Fylde	
Conservative	47
Labour	38
Liberal Democrat	15
Uncommitted	69
Other	4
Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale	
Conservative	53
Labour	38
Liberal Democrat	14
Uncommitted	64
Other	19
Chorley	
Conservative	20
Labour	20
Liberal Democrat	8
Uncommitted	22
Other	3
Hyndburn	
Conservative	18
Labour	16
Liberal Democrat	7
Uncommitted	17
Other	9

	Number
Lancaster	
Conservative	28
Labour	38
Liberal Democrat	15
Uncommitted	38
Other	10
Ormskirk	
Conservative	20
Labour	18
Liberal Democrat	1
Uncommitted	18
Other	7
Preston	
Conservative	32
Labour	37
Liberal Democrat	11
Uncommitted	60
Other	17
South Ribble	
Conservative	19
Labour	24
Liberal Democrat	4
Uncommitted	13
Other	3
Wyre	
Conservative	14
Labour	27
Liberal Democrat	3
Uncommitted	28
Other	0

Postal Votes

John Barrett: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many people registered for a permanent postal vote in each year since 1997. [176738]

Mr. Leslie: Individual Electoral Registration Officers keep records of the number of postal voters in their registration area, though separate records are not kept of long-term postal voters and those for one election only. It is possible to apply for a postal vote at any time, but figures are not maintained on a yearly basis. Available statistics show that at the 2001 general election, 1,758,055 postal votes were issued in total, compared to 937,205 at the 1997 general election.

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment he has made of the impact on the all-postal European and local election ballot in the North West of England of the delay in printing ballot packs; what discussions he has had with the Electoral Commission about the delay; what information he has sent to returning officers; and what contingency plans are in place should the ballot packs not be available in time. [176818]

Mr. Leslie: My officials and I have been working very closely with returning officers, suppliers and the Royal Mail to ensure that the ballot packs were delivered in a timely manner in the four all-postal regions. Although there were delays with the production of ballot packs for a few local authorities in the North West, I am pleased that full issue to the Royal Mail occurred within a few hours of the target deadline. There is no need to implement any further contingency arrangements. The Electoral Commission has been kept informed of developments by my officials, in order to inform their evaluation.

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will instruct electoral returning officers in postal pilot regions to log *(a)* the total number of ballot paper envelopes received after the close of polls and *(b)* the postmarks on such envelopes. [176834]

Mr. Leslie: Given that the Electoral Commission evaluation will include a statement of the number of ballot papers received in the period of a week after the close of poll, I have no plans to make any further such request of Returning Officers. There is no requirement for ballot pack envelopes to have postmarks on them as they are returned in prepaid envelopes.

Virginia Bottomley: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many people have registered for a permanent postal vote in *(a)* Surrey and *(b)* South West Surrey constituency in each year from 1996. [177371]

Mr. Leslie: Individual Electoral Registration Officers keep records of the number of postal voters in their registration area, though separate records are not kept of long-term postal voters and those for one election only. It is possible to apply for a postal vote at any time, but figures are not maintained on a yearly basis. However, the following information is available for the 1997 and 2001 general elections:

Total number of postal voters

	1997	*2001*
Surrey	17,987	31,021
South West Surrey	2,436	3,462

In addition, the Electoral Registration Officer for Waverley borough council has advised that there are currently 9,255 registered postal voters in South West Surrey constituency.

Virginia Bottomley: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will invite electoral returning officers in Surrey *(a)* to log and *(b)* to report on (i) the total number of ballot paper envelopes received late and (ii) the distribution of dates on post marks. [177372]

Mr. Leslie: I have no plans at present to invite Surrey Returning Officers to make such reports. There is no provision in law for me to do so.

Youth Disorder

Mr. George Howarth: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what review has been undertaken of the use of four-month detention and training orders as provided for under the powers of the Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000 in relation to dealing with disorder amongst young people. [172322]

Paul Goggins: I have been asked to reply.

The detention and training order is the main custodial sentence for 12–17 year olds: the minimum term is four months and the maximum 24 months. Time spent in custody is followed by an equivalent period in the community.

The DTO is one of a range of options available to courts dealing with young offenders. Most disorder offences would not normally attract custody: the tests for the court are whether the offence or offences in question are so serious that a custodial sentence is the only adequate response; or, where an offence is violent or sexual, whether custody is necessary to protect the public from serious harm from the offender.

Research commissioned by the Youth Justice Board on the first two years' operation of the DTO found that, in the main, the combination of custody and community supervision worked well. It concluded that greater co-operation across the youth justice system would help to meet the needs of DTO trainees, including the need to prevent reoffending. The Youth Justice Board is addressing this.

Following consultation in its 8 September 2003 paper Youth Justice—The Next Steps, the Government proposes to keep the DTO and simplify the range of available community sentences . We also intend to introduce a new Intensive Supervision and Surveillance order for use with serious and persistent young offenders.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Action on Debt Booklet

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many copies of the "Action on Debt" booklet produced by the Social Exclusion Unit have been printed; [175629]

(2) what the total cost was of *(a)* publishing, *(b)* printing and *(c)* distributing the "Action on Debt" booklet produced by the Social Exclusion Unit; [175630]

(3) how many civil servants were employed in publishing the "Action on Debt" booklet produced by the Social Exclusion Unit. [175631]

Yvette Cooper: The "Action on Debt" fact pack is available on the web and 12,000 hard copies were printed. The publication costs were £9,898; the printing costs were £3,805; and the initial distribution cost was £3,240 (all figures excluding VAT). The costs of further mailing in response to requests are not identified separately from other Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's publications.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister estimates that the production of the fact pack absorbed around 0.5 full-time equivalent civil servants over a period of three months, with a small amount of additional specialist support e.g. on design. The fact pack is part of the developing cross-Government strategy on over-indebtedness. It is a practical guide to what organisations in a range of sectors can do to tackle debt problems and highlights in particular the cost-effectiveness of early intervention.

Affordable Housing

Simon Hughes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his Department's projections are for the demand for affordable housing in Greater London for each of the next five years; and what estimate he has made of the public subsidy which will be required to meet that demand in each year. [177049]

Keith Hill: The Mayor of London's Plan states that an additional 22,400 households a year of all types will need to be accommodated in London over the next 15 years. In addition there is a backlog of unmet need of 112,000 households. The London Housing Board has begun the preparation of the next long-term housing strategy for the capital to cover the period up to 2016. This will take account of the detailed housing requirements study the Greater London Authority is currently carrying out. On 21 October last year my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister announced £2.1 billion for investment in housing in London for the next two years. My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister also made an announcement on 24 March 2004 about the Housing Corporation's Annual Development Programme for affordable housing in the capital for 2004–05 and 2005–06.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to provide additional resources for affordable housing in those parts of the South East where housing is least affordable. [177487]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has set out in the Sustainable Communities Plan proposals to tackle the supply of affordable housing.

£5 billion is being invested in housing over the next two years (2004–06) and of this over £730 million is targeted at the South East region. The role of the regions has been strengthened to ensure this investment is more effectively targeted towards local and regional investment priorities; with Regional Housing Boards advising Ministers on the priorities for investment within the region through their Regional Housing Strategies.

The Government have accepted that there is a case for increased investment in social housing and has said it will begin to address this in the 2004 Spending Review.

Borrowing (Assets)

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when councils will be allowed to borrow against their assets in the same way as housing associations. [175949]

Keith Hill: Local housing authorities may not borrow against housing assets because if they were to default on the loan repayment, it could result in the lender taking control of local authority housing stock, which is unacceptable. There are no plans to change this rule.

Bridlington Council (Rates)

John Mann: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the implications of Bridlington council charging 90 per cent. second home rateable value for wooden chalets. [176109]

Mr. Raynsford: Council tax is payable on a daily basis. If a dwelling is no one's sole or main residence and is substantially unfurnished it is exempt from council tax for a period of up to six months. A dwelling which is furnished and is no one's sole or main residence is subject to council tax at a discounted rate. From the financial year 2004–05, the Government have given local billing authorities the discretion to set the council tax discount offered on furnished unoccupied homes at any point between 10 per cent. and 50 per cent. This followed a consultation exercise in 2001 when there was overwhelming support for the idea of second homeowners paying full council tax on their second home. The regulations allow local authorities to differentiate between those properties which have a planning restriction preventing occupancy all year round and those which do not.

It is up to local billing authorities to decide how to use this new freedom as the Government believe that they are best placed to make decisions on second homes discounts.

Business Rates (Respite Care)

Mr. Dawson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what representations he has made about the higher levels of business rates charged to the providers of respite care. [176554]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has received no such representations.

Council Tax (Second Homes)

John Mann: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he defines a seafront wooden chalet as a second home for the purposes of council tax liability. [176432]

Mr. Raynsford: Council tax is only payable on a domestic property which is on the valuation list. It is for the Valuation Office Agency to decide whether a dwelling should be included on the list. In doing this they would take account of the case Lewis v Christchurch Borough Council [1996] RA.229 in which 340 beach huts resting on a sand bank were found to be dwellings for the purpose of council tax and should be included separately in the valuation list. If a property is on the valuation list, the local billing authority will determine council tax liability.

Counterfeit Goods

Brian White: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to ensure that local authority trading standards departments take action against people selling counterfeit goods. [171108]

Ms Hewitt: I have been asked to reply.

Counterfeit goods are a serious threat to consumers, industry and the economy as a whole. Last year we introduced a number of very effective measures to help business tackle counterfeiting. For example we removed the restrictions on Customs passing information on counterfeit foods to Trading Standards Departments, and all Intellectual Property Right registration fees with Customs were abolished.

The priorities for local authority trading standards departments are not uniform and will vary according to local circumstances. The National Performance Framework for Trading Standards introduced by my department in consultation with other government departments and the service recognises the need to ensure local services have scope to determine how to create a fair and safe trading environment taking into account local circumstances and local consumer and business expectations. The work of Trading Standards in combating the problem of counterfeit goods will be part of this framework.

The Patent Office has also worked with the Trading Standards Institute to produce a new intellectual property module for the Diploma in Consumer Affairs. The Patent Office in conjunction with Trading Standards North West has developed an interactive CD package that guides trading standard's officers through the investigation process.

Departmental Annual Report

Norman Lamb: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much the production of his Department's latest annual report cost; how many copies were printed; how many copies of it were sold at its cover price; to whom copies of the report have been provided free of charge; and how many copies were provided free of charge. [171141]

Yvette Cooper: The latest available figures are those for the 2003 Annual Report published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in May 2003.

704 copies of the 2003 Annual Report have been distributed in total. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister paid £16,400 for the design and production of the Report and the printing and distribution of 355 copies free of charge to MPs, various stakeholder groups and internally to officials within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. In addition the publisher, The Stationery Office Ltd. sold a further 349 copies.

Departmental Buildings

Mr. Flight: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many buildings in England his Department owns that were used at less than 25 per cent. capacity for more than three months in 2003–04. [174981]

Yvette Cooper: The only buildings owned or leased by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister which were used at less than 25 per cent. capacity for more than three months in 2003–04 were six buildings in the Eastern Region from which Government Office-based staff transferred to new premises. Since that time one of these offices has been sub-let, one has been two thirds let, one has been handed back to the landlord, two are in the process of being let and one remains on the market. Although the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has overall responsibility for Government Office East, the Government Offices carry out functions on behalf of ten Government Departments.

Information relating to NDPB's with their own land holding powers could be gathered only at disproportionate cost.

Domestic Violence

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the Supporting People programme with respect to tackling domestic violence. [177564]

Yvette Cooper: Adults who have experienced domestic violence or who are at risk of domestic violence are one of the groups of people helped by the Supporting People programme. Administering local authorities research, plan and commission housing-related support services for vulnerable people, including the survivors of domestic violence. These services form part of the package of help which survivors need.

Energy Performance (Buildings)

Norman Baker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what studies he has commissioned of the policies being adopted by other EU member states concerning obligations on owners of larger privately-owned buildings to implement Article 7.3 of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, with specific reference to the labelling of buildings open to the public. [176927]

Phil Hope: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 13 January, *Official Report*, column. 723W. In the period since then officials of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister have enquired about other Member States' intentions on the labelling of buildings open to the public both at European Commission meetings and in informal contacts with officials in other States. There have been few clear signals, but the Commission has clarified the meaning of the Article, and more Member States are expected to announce their positions in the coming months.

Extra Care Housing

Dr. Whitehead: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what funding plans he has for the development of extra care sheltered housing. [175250]

Dr. Ladyman: I have been asked to reply.

The development of extra care housing is being supported by £87 million made available for 2004–05 and 2005–06 through the extra care housing fund. The fund is run by the Department in partnership with the Housing Corporation, supported by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. £29 million has been allocated for 2004–05 to successful bids from 19 councils with social services responsibilities (CSSRs). This will create 1,532 additional extra care housing places, to be delivered through local partnerships with housing associations and other bodies.

A further £17.7 million has been pre-allocated to five CSSRs for 2005–06.

Bidding guidance and a timetable for bids for the remaining £40.3 million to be allocated for 2005–06 will be published shortly.

Fire and Rescue Service

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what consultations he has held since January with Fire Service regional management boards. [176972]

Mr. Raynsford: The target date for Fire and Rescue Authorities to establish Regional Management Boards (RMBs) was 1 April 2004, after the most recent consultations—on Fire and Rescue Control Rooms and on Charging by Fire and Rescue Authorities—had already commenced.

However, as joint committees, Regional Management Boards do not directly account to the electorate for the performance of the fire and rescue service. This is the responsibility of their constituent Fire and Rescue Authorities, so the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will continue formally to consult the Authorities on Government proposals.

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the legal status is of the Fire Service regional management boards. [176973]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister understands that, in accordance with the guidance issued by the Local Government Association in November 2003, Regional Management Boards have been established as joint committees under Sections 101 and 102 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on progress towards establishment of new negotiating machinery within the Fire and Rescue Service. [176974]

Mr. Raynsford: The Pay and Conditions Agreement June 2003 between the Fire Brigades Union and the Local Government Employers stated that

> "By 30th November 2003 a working group representative of fire service stakeholders will propose revisions to the Constitution of the NJC."

The time-scale for the work was subsequently extended and a report from Rita Donaghy, chair of ACAS, recommending changes to the National Joint Council's constitution was published on 15 March. Negotiations on this are still continuing.

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) if he will make a statement on the merits of *(a)* giving statutory effect to section IX, paragraph 13 of the Fire and Rescue Service's Grey Book and *(b)* indemnifying firefighters for loss due to insurance policy exclusions in respect of terrorist incidents following death or injury on duty as methods of resolving the problem faced by firefighters whose insurance contains exclusions relating to activities which they may be required to perform in the course of their duties; [176994]

(2) if he will indemnify members of fire brigades within defined limits against failure by life or disability insurers to pay out on policies held by firefighters following death or injury on duty on the grounds of policy exclusions in respect of terrorist incidents. [176941]

Mr. Raynsford: The Conditions of Service (Grey Book) agreed by the employing authorities and the Fire Brigades' Union provides in Section IX for compensation for death and serious injury on duty. This

is no fault compensation and negligence does not have to be proved. It is not appropriate for this to remain as part of the Conditions of Service and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister intends to bring these, together with injury benefits from the firefighters' pension scheme, into a separate death and injury scheme which will be made under clause 33 of the Fire and Rescue Services Bill.

There are provisions within the Conditions of Service and the Firefighters' Pension Scheme that provide for awards in the event of injury or death either occurring in, or as a result of, the exercise of duty. Dependent on the circumstances of an individual, these can provide up to 85% of salary in the event of an injury curtailing earning capacity and up to seven times pensionable pay in the event of death. The latter is more generous than that available to any other public sector worker, including members of the Armed Forces.

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his latest estimate is of the total cost of implementing the strategy of regional fire control rooms, including procurements, relocation and redundancy costs. [177001]

Mr. Raynsford: The Mott MacDonald report on the "Future of Fire and Rescue Service Control Rooms in England and Wales", published on 11 December 2003, includes estimates of both the number of posts that will no longer be required and redundancy costs. Copies were made available in the Library of the House.

The estimated procurement cost is commercially sensitive information which cannot be released during the current procurement process. As sites for the regional control centres have not yet been chosen, relocation costs cannot yet be known.

Fire Safety

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what procedures are in place to consult stakeholders on the content of guidance proposed to support the implementation of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order. [176564]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will be producing guidance documents aimed at different sectors. In each case we will be consulting with representatives of the fire industry and the enforcers and with business interests relevant to the sector covered by the guidance document. Consultation will take place as each guide is developed.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) if he will introduce into the Building Regulations limitations on the generation of smoke and toxicity from construction materials; [176565]

(2) whether he proposes to retain compartmentation as the basis of fire protection in non-domestic buildings when Approved Document B to the Building Regulations is next reviewed; [176566]

(3) what plans he has to change the requirements for compartmentation fire protection in large warehouses in the next review of Approved Document B to the Building Regulations. [176567]

Phil Hope: The review of the fire safety aspects of the Building Regulations in England and Wales that is now under way is considering a broad range of issues, including those that the hon. Member has mentioned. Any decision in the future with regard to changes to Approved Document B would need to take account of a range of views, expert advice and of course a full Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA). The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects to be in a position to publish a detailed public consultation paper, including a supporting draft RIA, early in 2005.

Firelink Radio System

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects to announce a decision on the selection of a contractor for the Firelink radio system. [176971]

Mr. Raynsford: Contract award is expected in November 2004.

Former Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which former officials of the former Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions asked for permission to join *(a)* Pricewaterhouse Coopers, *(b)* Deloitte and Touche, *(c)* Ernst and Young and *(d)* KMPG. [177505]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not have any record of any application covering the organisations listed above for those former Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions officials who subsequently became Office Deputy Prime Minister officials.

Gender Pay Gap

Mr. Denham: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the pay gap between men and women employed by his Department and its agencies in *(a)* Southampton, *(b)* Eastleigh, *(c)* Winchester and *(d)* Romsey. [171630]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and its agencies do not have offices in the areas referred to but my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister has ministerial responsibility for Ordnance Survey (OS) which is a non-ministerial Government Department based in Southampton.

Ordnance Survey undertook an Equal Pay Review in mid 2002 covering all aspects of the pay system. There were no significant issues to address but Ordnance Survey is continuing to monitor the situation.

High Hedges

Chris Grayling: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when the new legal provisions on high hedges will come into force. [176957]

Yvette Cooper: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for South-East Cambridgeshire (Mr. Paice) on 18 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 843W.

Honours

Brian White: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much time his Department spent dealing with honours in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by Civil Service grade. [173033]

Yvette Cooper: The majority of the work on honours is undertaken by the departmental honours team. Honours work in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is dealt with in a dedicated Honours Secretariat dealing with honours nominations for both the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Department for Transport. One HEO deals with Office of the Deputy Prime Minister matters full-time and a SEO and AO deal with matters arising for both Departments.

Senior Civil Servants time spent on honours sift meetings

	Total hours
Grade 1	8
Grade 2	18
Grade 3	16
Grade 6	2

Information is not available on time spent on honours related work by departmental staff who are not members of the Office's honours team or attendees of the formal sifting meetings.

Housing

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will publish the responses to his housing investment allowance proposals for council housing put forward in 2002. [174662]

Keith Hill: A copy of the summary of responses to the 2002 consultation paper, "The Way Forward For Housing Capital Finance", has been made available in the Libraries of the House.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans his Department has to increase financial support for affordable housing in Coventry. [176015]

Keith Hill: £7,421,916 has been allocated for housing in Coventry to fund 174 new dwellings of affordable housing for the period 2004 to 2006.

The West Midlands Regional Housing Strategy is to be reviewed by early 2005. It will be underpinned by comprehensive research into the need for affordable housing in the region. This will inform future funding allocations.

Mr. Hopkins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the level of housing revenue account debt for each local authority in England. [176819]

Keith Hill: The level of housing revenue account (HRA) debt for 2002–03, the latest year for which we have audited figures, for each authority with an HRA and with debt is tabled as follows:

	£
Adur	11,980,239
Alnwick	9,718,380
Amber Valley	11,492,297
Arun	8,525,809
Ashfield	28,138,261
Ashford	7,853,942
Babergh	5,481,723
Barnet	28,707,962
Barnsley	124,111,639
Barrow	13,689,577
Basildon	139,324,725
Bassetlaw	30,504,371
Birmingham	595,666,479
Blaby	2,234,916
Blackpool	21,294,853
Blyth Valley	34,326,841
Bolsover	14,138,688
Bolton	114,678,451
Bournemouth	18,166,931
Bradford	170,311,867
Braintree	8,087,328
Brent	259,863,909
Brentwood	848,458
Brighton and Hove	103,650,315
Bristol	192,398,196
Broxbourne	4,277,758
Broxtowe	8,810,051
Bury	23,600,492
Cambridge	5,208,820
Camden	457,183,667
Cannock Chase	26,679,398
Canterbury	7,565,000
Caradon	5,430,510
Carlisle	20,606,585
Carrick	1,188,690
Castle Morpeth	15,209,780
Charnwood	3,608,781
Chesterfield	32,033,259
Chester-le-Street	18,897,309
Chorley	7,331,821
City of London	13,266,865
City of York	23,519,361
Colchester	27,488,524
Copeland	13,890,484
Corby	1,761,802
Craven	1,143,178
Crewe	13,163,332
Croydon	84,012,395
Darlington	29,374,951
Derby	107,807,650
Derwentside	40,149,865
Doncaster	128,691,137
Dudley	77,545,051
Durham	25,341,465
Ealing	145,262,396
Easington	60,677,693
East Riding	6,211,562
East Stafford	2,879,961
Eastbourne	30,344,628
Ellesmere Port	14,126,800
Enfield	65,684,818
Fareham	5,887,470
Fenland	9,168,568
Forest of Dean	3,453,384
Gateshead	111,585,221
Gloucester	21,475,448
Gosport	3,080,297
Gravesham	6,272,160
Great Yarmouth	21,490,585
Greenwich	392,352,770
Guildford	2,766,263
Hackney	604,104,213
Halton	26,804,163
Hammersmith	205,711,402
Harborough	3,487,513
Haringey	391,956,681
Harrogate	7,968,684

	£
Harrow	32,764,732
Hartlepool	57,621,117
Havering	9,603,622
Herefordshire	8,839,288
High Peak	15,020,224
Hillingdon	25,810,833
Hinckley	1,094,273
Hounslow	150,040,088
Hyndburn	24,310,543
Ipswich	40,180,414
Isles of Scilly	553,925
Islington	648,599,804
Kensington	125,222,717
Kettering	4,485,944
Kings Lynn	16,540,894
Kingston Upon Hull	211,439,691
Kingston upon Thames	15,472,165
Kirklees	124,930,562
Knowsley	127,858,660
Lambeth	580,400,757
Lancaster	20,538,606
Leeds	369,981,780
Leicester	182,473,632
Lewes	13,730,655
Lewisham	378,302,773
Lincoln	32,497,281
Liverpool	545,233,243
Luton	28,366,330
Maidstone	12,484,329
Manchester	755,262,765
Mansfield	44,429,488
Medway Towns	18,437,478
Melton	3,709,727
Merton	8,756,390
Mid Devon	5,770,637
Mid Suffolk	17,784,743
Middlesbrough	96,288,162
Milton Keynes	91,510,405
NE Derbyshire	32,179,855
New Forest	9,805,772
Newark	21,239,654
Newcastle upon Tyne	291,513,082
Newham	415,928,280
North Cornwall	5,472,259
North East Linc.	46,344,741
North Kesteven	16,731,499
North Lincoln	31,749,110
North Norfolk	15,447,810
North Shropshire	2,609,437
North Tyneside	128,414,714
North Warwick	4,275,412
Northampton	10,243,355
Norwich	69,631,073
Nottingham	229,363,937
Nuneaton	14,256,521
NW Leicester	10,887,278
Oadby and Wigston	1,640,954
Oldham	131,958,003
Oswestry	4,117,708
Oxford City	26,067,542
Pendle	9,411,335
Peterborough	38,748,910
Plymouth	77,932,220
Poole	6,423,208
Portsmouth	49,467,918
Preston	47,509,366
Purbeck	6,486,383
Reading	50,964,473
Redbridge	5,278,701
Redcar and Cleve.	72,358,227
Ribble Valley	4,933,381
Richmondshire	4,558,475
Rochdale	125,619,325
Rochford	13,374,598
Rossendale	22,917,151
Rotherham	86,197,091
Rugby	9,621,945
Rushcliffe	10,193,380
Salford	264,700,682
Salisbury	3,100,516
Sandwell	153,475,617
Scarborough	1,628,567
Sedgefield	20,968,254
Sedgemoor	4,133,738
Sefton	62,818,383
Selby	1,869,973
Sheffield	453,874,631
Shepway	16,708,330
Slough	310,252
Solihull	41,456,202
South Derby	8,179,264
South Gloucs.	4,568,071
South Holland	3,749,509
South Kesteven	9,820,966
South Norfolk	8,818,239
South Tyneside	105,501,729
Southampton	99,562,116
Southend-on-Sea	26,946,215
Southwark	676,348,289
St. Albans	4,506,985
St. Helens	85,703,384
Stafford	19,348,657
Stockport	54,550,497
Stockton	78,603,105
Stoke-on-Trent	77,899,143
Sutton	11,089,142
Swindon	26,932,824
Tamworth	33,498,744
Tandridge	735,324
Taunton Deane	24,179,796
Teesdale	4,040,171
Teignbridge	1,618,058
Tendring	19,023,423
Thanet	11,588,305
Thurrock	10,606,151
Torridge	3,034,393
Tower Hamlets	492,204,784
Trafford	20,036,051
Wakefield	110,548,189
Walsall	120,591,468
Waltham Forest	182,472,943
Wandsworth	84,775,994
Wansbeck	20,667,542
Warrington	24,666,192
Warwick	8,649,597
Waveney	14,391,516
Waverley	3,898,313
Wealden	13,270,035
Wear Valley	26,998,490
Wellingborough	8,616,825
Westminster	146,739,718
Wigan	107,449,064
Winchester	9,380,413
Wirral	87,029,266
Woking	2,284,636
Wokingham	5,472,913
Wolverhampton	162,966,352
Worcester	25,039,132

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what research evidence he has on which to base his statement to the London Tenants' Federation conference on 27 November that some means of transfer meets the interests of the tenants better than having stock run by councils. [176274]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's research report Views on the Large Scale Voluntary Transfer Process—May 2000, which is available in the Library of the House, provides evidence that tenants of LSVT associations are more satisfied with their current landlord than local authority tenants as a whole.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will publish the evidence submitted by local authorities to the consultation, 'The Way Forward for Housing Capital Finance', August 2002. [176277]

Keith Hill: Copies of the evidence submitted by local authorities, as well as other interested parties who responded to the consultation 'The Way Forward for Housing Capital Finance', August 2002, will be made available in the Library of the Houses.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment his Department has made of the increase in housing waiting lists in the South East; and if he will re-evaluate the Government's pledge to provide a decent home for all in the South East to take account of this increase. [177474]

Keith Hill: The number of households on local authority housing registers in the South East rose from 116,000 to 147,000 between April 2000 and April 2003. This does not, however, on its own, provide a robust assessment of housing need. This is because different criteria are adopted for inclusion in registers, some authorities operate joint registers with housing associations and some households will no longer be in housing need—the frequency of checks that applicants continue to require housing differ.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister remains committed to its targets to bring all social housing up to a decent standard by 2010 and to reduce the proportion of vulnerable private sector households living in non decent housing.

Our existing target to reduce the numbers of statutorily homeless families in temporary accommodation, as part of the Public Service Agreement framework, reflects our commitment to tackling shortages in affordable housing. Funding for affordable housing has increased significantly since 2001–02. Allocations for 2004–05 and 2005–06 reflect recommendations from the South East Regional Housing Board for prioritisation for local authority areas with particular affordability or homelessness problems.

In an initial response to the findings of the Barker Review of Housing Supply, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister made it clear that the Government accepted the need to increase the supply of affordable housing. Funding levels for 2006–07 and 2007–08 are being considered in the current Spending Review.

Inspections and Reviews

Andrew George: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment his Department has made of the cost to *(a)* each of the local authorities in Cornwall and *(b)* the Council of the Isles of Scilly of meeting its obligation of monitoring, inspection, review and assessment by, for (i) the Audit Plan, (ii) the Audit Commission, (iii) the Social Services Inspectorate, (iv) Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Schools, (v) Ofsted, (vi) the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate, (vii) Best Value, (viii) comprehensive performance assessments, (ix) the preparation of statutory plans/strategies and (x) other inspections and reviews. [176730]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not currently hold information on the cost to individual local authorities of meeting inspection and monitoring requirements. We are however committed to driving performance improvement and recognise the need to ensure that inspection and monitoring are co-ordinated, proportionate and responsive to improvement priorities of each council. We have already introduced a range of freedoms for councils linked to Comprehensive Performance Assessment. As a result 'excellent' councils have seen significant reductions in inspection activity and the removal of all service plan requirements beyond the Best Value Performance Plans and Community Strategy. All other categories of council will have seen a 75 per cent. reduction in the number of plans overall and around a 20 per cent. reduction in the number of days inspectors spent in councils compared to 2002–03. We are working with the Office for Public Sector Reform to build on this work and to develop an approach to assessing cost effectiveness and the benefits of inspection within local government.

Key Worker Definition

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he intends to extend the key worker definition to private sector employees. [177486]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's 'Key Worker Living' (KWL) programme is aimed at helping to alleviate recruitment and retention—where these are linked to the high cost of housing—in frontline public services such as education, health and community safety. Only key workers directly employed by the public sector are eligible to apply for assistance through KWL. We have no plans to extend the programme to private sector employees.

Local Authorities

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what instructions have been given to local authorities to ensure that *(a)* children, *(b)* elderly people, *(c)* people with mental illness and *(d)* people with learning difficulties for whom the local authority has responsibility are not exposed to (i) racist opinion expressed by and (ii) policy decisions taken by elected representatives. [176828]

Mr. Raynsford: Regulations under the Local Government Act 2000 provide that under each local authority's code of conduct members must promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and must treat others with respect. In addition, the amended Race Relations Act puts a statutory duty on all local authorities to promote race equality, and prepare and publish a Race Equality Scheme that must

include provisions for assessing whether functions or policies are relevant to race equality, and for monitoring policies to see how they affect race' equality.

Local Elections

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the local authorities for which elections are being held in 2005, indicating in each case whether elections are being held in *(a)* all seats and *(b)* a third of seats. [177405]

Mr. Raynsford: There are no elections involving a third of seats. Whole council elections are being held in the following local authorities in 2005:

Bedfordshire County Council
Buckinghamshire County Council
Cambridgeshire County Council
Cheshire County Council
Cornwall County Council
Cumbria County Council
Derbyshire County Council
Devon County Council
Dorset County Council
Durham County Council
East Sussex County Council
Essex County Council
Gloucestershire County Council
Hampshire County Council
Hertfordshire County Council
Isle of Wight Council
Kent County Council
Lancashire County Council
Leicestershire County Council
Lincolnshire County Council
Norfolk County Council
North Yorkshire County Council
Northamptonshire County Council
Northumberland County Council
Nottinghamshire County Council
Oxfordshire County Council
Shropshire County Council
Somerset County Council
Staffordshire County Council
Suffolk County Council
Surrey County Council
Warwickshire County Council
West Sussex County Council
Wiltshire County Council
Worcestershire County Council

Local Government Finance (Cambridgeshire)

Mr. Moss: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* formula spending share for and *(b)* grant paid under the floors and ceilings policy to (i) Cambridgeshire County Council and (ii) each district council in Cambridgeshire were for (A) 2003–04 and (B) 2004–05. [176278]

Mr. Raynsford: The information requested is tabled as follows:

(£ million unless otherwise stated)

Local authority	*2003–04 formula spending shares*	*2003–04 formula grant after floors and ceilings*	*Adjusted 2003–04 formula spending shares*	*Adjusted 2003–04 formula grant after floors and ceilings*
Cambridgeshire	448.965	288.141	432.888	279.796
Cambridge	15.936	11.218	15.131	10.413
East Cambridgeshire	10.282	5.253	9.574	4.545
Fenland	12.364	6.900	11.815	6.351
Huntingdonshire	20.789	9.504	19.462	8.177
South Cambridgeshire	15.960	6.296	15.400	5.736

Local authority	*2004–05 formula spending shares*	*2004–05 formula grant after floors and ceilings*	*Percentage change in formula spending shares*	*Percentage change in formula grant*
Cambridgeshire	462.402	302.047	6.8	8.0
Cambridge	15.615	10.725	3.2	3.0
East Cambridgeshire	9.938	4.820	3.8	6.1
Fenland	12.111	6.658	2.5	4.8
Huntingdonshire	19.931	8.731	2.4	6.8
South Cambridgeshire	15.833	5.938	2.8	3.5

Due to changes in the funding and functions of local authorities between 2003–04 and 2004–05 it is inappropriate to compare these directly. The 2003–04 Formula Spending Share (FSS) and Formula Grant have therefore been adjusted to enable comparisons on a like-for-like basis. The percentage changes in both FSS and Formula Grant have been supplied for convenience.

Mr. Moss: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister from which *(a)* businesses, *(b)* charity organisations and *(c)* individuals he has received representations asking for Fenland District Council to have its council tax increase for 2004–05 capped. [176299]

Mr. Raynsford: Over the last few months the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has received a large volume of correspondence about council tax, some covering specific local authorities and others concerning the council tax system in general. An analysis of this information by type of respondent, subject matter and by local authority is not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Ministerial Travel

David Davis: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many journeys were made by helicopter by each Minister in his Department and its predecessors in each of the last 10 years; and what the journey length was in each case. [175736]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was established in May 2002. Since then Ministers have made three helicopter journeys, each to view the Thames Gateway. The information requested for predecessor Departments is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mobile Phone Masts

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what *(a)* regulatory framework and *(b)* code of conduct applies to the placement of mobile phone masts and base stations in proximity to (i) schools, (ii) hospitals and (iii) residential areas. [174540]

Yvette Cooper: Mobile phone mast and base station developments near schools, hospitals and in residential areas are subject to the normal planning regulations in place throughout England, unless exempted by the regulations set out in Part 24 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (GPDO). The planning arrangements for telecommunications developments were significantly strengthened in 2001 and include improved requirements for consulting local people about mast proposals. The changes to the GPDO were underpinned by revised guidance, set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 8, Telecommunications. The changes to the planning guidance also underlined that school governors must be consulted on all proposals for new masts on or near a school or college.

North West Objective 2 Advisory Group.

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister who sits on the Objective 2 advisory group at the Government Office for the North West; and how appointments to this group are made. [177084]

Mr. Raynsford: Representatives of the following organisations or sectors are on the Objective 2 advisory group:

Ian Hill, West Cumbria CVS
Pernille Kousgaard, North West Development Agency
Jon Piggott, Association of Colleges North West
Anne Cletheroe, North West Regional Assembly
Stuart Gibson, Lancashire Action Plan Partnerships
Anne Marie Harrison, Lancashire local authorities
Ann Steel, Cheshire local authorities
Celia Comrie, Greater Manchester Action Plan Partnerships
John Hawkins, Association of Greater Manchester Authorities
Emile Pinel, Voluntary Sector—North West Network
Christine Lambe, East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce
Tina Egan, North West Universities Association
Eric Hudson, North West Chambers Ltd.
Charles Holmes, Cheshire Action Plan Partnerships
Gillian Elliott, Cumbrian local authorities
Brian Lightowler, Cumbrian Action Plan Partnerships
Jo Lappin, Government Office North West
Norman Pearson, Government Office North West

Each representative has a named deputy who may attend and fully participate in meetings in their absence.

Nominations for each place are invited from the relevant sector/organisation, and membership of each Programme body, is formally reviewed on an annual basis.

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what criteria are used for deciding which bids go forward for further consideration by the North West Objective 2 advisory group; [177085]

(2) if he will list *(a)* the criteria, and *(b)* the scoring against that criteria, for the bids submitted to the Government Office for the North West for Objective 2 Priority 2 sub-regional projects. [177137]

Mr. Raynsford: The initial sift criteria used in deciding which bids should be invited to submit a full bid for Objective 2 Priority 2 funding of sub-regionally or regionally significant projects were as follows:

Criteria	*Marks available*
Gate criterion	
1. Evidence of regional or sub-regional impact	5 Good evidence 3 Some evidence 0 Little evidence
Other criteria	
2. Complementarity to Housing Market Renewal Initiative	1
3. Strategic Approach to creation of economic activity (e.g. micro and community enterprises)	2
4. Innovative within sub-region and exemplar	1
5. Applicant delivery capability (from risk assessment exercise)	2 Low risk 1 Medium risk 0 High risk or unknown
6. Transport and/or Tourism related	1
7. Addresses underachieving Single Programming Document (SPD) outputs	2
8. Address other SPD outputs or underachieving Programme Complement outputs	1
Total marks available	15

[1] Projects to score 3 or above to proceed to next round

The bids submitted for the initial sift exercise, were scored as follows:

Evidence of sub-regional/regional benefit	
A. Circus Skills Centre of Excellence Rochdale	12
B. Manchester and Salford Sustaining Neighbourhoods	10
C. Blackpool Regional Gaming Academy	9
D. Manchester Institute of Sport and Physical Activity	9
E. West Cumbria Social Enterprise Initiative	8
F. Preston Community Futures Centre of Excellence	8
G. Tameside Borough Credit Union	8
H. Emmaus Lancashire	8
I. Rochdale Homeworking Development	7
J. Oldham and Rochdale Partners in Action	7
K. Bolton Trinity Centre	6
Little evidence of sub-regional/regional benefit	
L. Blackburn with Darwen acting locally for a wider impact	10
M. Ashton Renewal Community Learning Facility	7
N. Ashton Renewal Social Recruitment Agency	4
O. Stockport First House	4
P. Ashton Renewal Public Realm Programme	4
Q. Connection to Work	3
R. Preston E-Community Development Centre	2
S. Rochdale MBC and GMPTE real time public transport	3
T. Lancashire police turning on the harbour lights	1

The breakdown against each criterion was:

	Criteria and score awarded								
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*Total*
Organisation (codes above)									
A	5	0	2	1	0	1	2	1	12
B	3	1	0	0	2	1	2	1	10
C	5	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	9
D	5	0	0	1	0	1	2	0	9
E	3	0	2	1	0	0	2	0	8
F	3	0	0	1	1	0	2	1	8
G	3	0	2	1	2	0	0	0	8
H	3	0	2	0	0	0	2	1	8
I	3	0	0	1	1	0	2	0	7
J	3	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	7
K	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	6
Cut off point for inviting full bids									
L	0	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	10
M	0	0	2	0	2	0	2	1	7
N	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	0	4
O	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	4
P	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	4
Q	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	3
R	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
S	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	3
T	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list projects which *(a)* were and *(b)* were not put forward for further consideration for Objective 2 Priority 2 sub-regional funding on 20 April by the Objective 2 advisory group. [177086]

Mr. Raynsford: The bids invited to submit full applications for further consideration were:

Manchester and Salford Sustaining Neighbourhoods

West Cumbria Social Enterprise Initiative

Preston Community Futures Centre of Excellence

Tameside Borough Credit Union

Emmaus Lancashire

Rochdale MBC Homeworking Development

Oldham and Rochdale Partners in Action

Bolton Trinity Centre

Skylight Circus Skills Centre of Excellence

Blackpool and Fylde Regional Gaming Academy

Manchester Institute of Sport and Physical Activity

The bids not invited to submit full applications were:

Blackburn with Darwen Acting Locally for a Wider Impact

Ashton Renewal Community Learning Facility

Ashton Renewal Social Recruitment Agency

Ashton Renewal Public Realm Programme

Stockport First House

Tameside Connection to Work

Preston E-Community Development Centre

Rochdale MBC and GMPTE Real Time Public Transport

Lancashire Police Turning on the Harbour Lights

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what bid for Objective 2 Priority 2 sub-regional projects scored highest out of bids put forward to the Government Office for the North West. [177136]

Mr. Raynsford: Skylight Circus Skills Centre of Excellence scored highest in the initial appraisal round, scoring 12 marks from a maximum of 15 marks available.

Official Vehicles

John Barrett: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage of official vehicles used by his Office are run on *(a)* petrol, *(b)* diesel, *(c)* liquid petroleum gas and *(d)* compressed natural gas. [172778]

Yvette Cooper: The Government as a whole have signed up to various targets for improving the performance of their own vehicle fleet, details of which, together with reports on each Department's progress towards these targets, are available at: www.sustainable-development.gov.uk

Ministerial group vehicles in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister are provided by the Government Car Service. Detailed information on the breakdown of the GCS vehicle fleet is being provided separately.

The following table provides a breakdown of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's vehicle fleet (apart from those referred to in the previous paragraph) as of May 2004 by vehicle category and fuel type. Although the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has overall responsibility for the buildings occupied by Government offices, they carry out functions on behalf of 10 Departments.

	May 2004	
	Number	*Percentage*
ODPM(C)		
Cars		
Petrol	—	—
Diesel	5	83
LPG	—	—

	May 2004	
	Number	Percentage
Natural gas	—	—
Electric	1	17
Total	6	100
Vans (< 3.5t)		
Petrol	—	—
Diesel	—	—
LPG/natural gas	—	—
Electric	1	100
Total	1	100
Government offices		
Cars		
Petrol	18	32
Diesel	25	44
LPG	13	22
Natural gas	0	—
Electric	1	2
Total	57	100

In addition, there is the fleet of Green Goddesses and fire training vehicles used by the Fire Service College, all of which run on diesel.

Ordnance Survey

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the current valuation is of the Ordnance Survey. [177475]

Yvette Cooper: The Balance Sheet of Ordnance Survey is shown in the Annual Report and Accounts. The most recent Accounts including the opinion of the Comptroller and Auditor General of the National Audit Office were published on 10July 2003 and show a value of £57,919,000.

PFI Contracts

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he is planning amendments to the structure under which private finance initiative contracts are awarded; and if he will make a statement. [177017]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has no current plans to amend the structure under which private finance initiative contracts are awarded. We continue to follow Her Majesty's Treasury guidance on Private Finance Initiative.

Postal Voting

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on his policy requiring electoral registration officers to issue lists of postal voters who have voted prior to polling day in general, European, local council and regional elections and referendums; and if he will estimate the timescale for introducing such a requirement. [159041]

Phil Hope: Ordinarily, our electoral arrangements do not provide for the release by returning officers, before the close of poll, of "polling progress information" showing lists of electors who have voted. However, political parties have tended to make arrangements to identify electors who have cast their votes at polling stations on Polling Day. Such arrangements are not possible at an all-postal election.

Against this background, some local authorities were permitted in 2002 and 2003 to provide polling progress information before the close of poll at local election pilots. The European Parliamentary and Local Elections (Pilots) Act 2004 requires that such information must be provided by returning officers in this year's four pilot regions to persons or organisations specified in the pilot order made under its provisions.

Before taking decisions about introducing such a requirement in elections or referendums more generally, we will want to have careful regard to the outcome of the pilots undertaken in this year's combined European Parliamentary and local elections and to the Electoral Commission's evaluation of those pilots.

Regional Funding (Worcestershire)

Mr. Luff: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the further report by Professors Blanchflower and Oswald on Calculating an Appropriate Regional Funding Adjustment for Worcestershire, a copy of which has been sent by the county council; and what assessment he has made of the relative pay levels of Worcestershire compared to neighbouring areas. [177065]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister have considered the further report by Professors Oswald and Blanchflower and concluded that it does not provide a case for awarding Worcestershire an area cost adjustment (ACA) top-up within the local government funding system.

The relative pay levels of Worcestershire, if they were to be considered separately, would similarly not justify an ACA factor higher than one, which is the present ACA factor for Hereford and Worcestershire.

As announced in the 2001 white paper 'strong local leadership—quality public services' (CM5237) the funding formulae will be frozen for at least 2004–05 and 2005–06. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not intend to change the way that the ACA is calculated during this period.

Standards Board

Mr. Luff: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions he has had with the Standards Board for England about the appropriateness of its making public the result of its investigation of councillors during an election for which councillors are standing for re-election. [177444]

Mr. Raynsford: While neither my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister nor I have had any such discussions with the Standards Board, my officials have sent to the Board's Chief Executive guidance, issued by the Secretary of the Cabinet, on the conduct of business in the period before elections. That guidance indicates that for non-departmental public bodies decisions on individual matters are for the bodies concerned.

Starter Homes Initiative

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many key workers, broken down by worker category, were assisted by the Starter Homes Initiative; [175947]

(2) how much was spent on *(a)* administration and *(b)* staff costs under the Starter Homes Initiative. [175948]

Keith Hill: At the end of April 2004, 9,021 key workers had completed their house purchases under the £250 million Starter Home Initiative (SHI): 4,028 health workers, 3,255 teachers, 1,351 police and 387 other key workers such as social workers. 295 of these were key workers who jointly purchased a home with another key worker. There are also some further key workers who exchanged contracts before the end of March 2004 who have still to complete their SHI house purchases.

As at the end of April 2004, £12.4 million had been spent on scheme managers' administration costs including marketing of the scheme, an average of £1,374 per key worker helped.

In addition, extra funding was identified in March 2004 to help a further 1,200 key workers applying under the SHI. A breakdown of this figure by sector is not held centrally.

Staff costs in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister associated with the Starter Home Initiative are in the region of £220,000 over the entire three-year life of the scheme.

Temporary Staff

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many staff the Department employs on a temporary basis through employment agencies; what percentage this is of total staff employed; and how much the Department paid employment agencies to supply temporary staff in *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2002–03 and *(c)* 2003–04 to the most recent date for which figures are available. [158241]

Yvette Cooper: The Office was formed on 29 May 2002. At any one time the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister employs approximately 120 individuals through employment agencies, which represents around 5 per cent. of the total staff employed. Since June 2002 the Office has spent £4.2 million with employment agencies.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 8 June 2004

PRIME MINISTER

Iraq

Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister what papers he has submitted to date to Lord Butler's inquiry into intelligence on Iraq; and whether officials from his office have given oral evidence to the inquiry. [177071]

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer my hon. Friend the Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mr. Rammell) gave to him on 8 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 303W.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Aston Down Airfield

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what criteria are used in the planning system to decide when an environmental impact assessment is considered necessary; and what assessment he has made of whether such an assessment is required in respect of the proposed development at Aston Down Airfield, near Stroud in Gloucestershire. [177598]

Keith Hill: In response to the first part of this question, I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 27 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 885W. On 24 March 2003, a screening direction under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1999 (SI 1999 No. 293) was issued to the effect that, in the opinion of the Secretary of State, my righ hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister, the proposed development at Aston Down Airfield, near Stroud, would not be likely to have a significant effect on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location.

Ellipse Project

Mr. Steen: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many letters he has received about the decision made by Westminster council to approve The Ellipse project for the Royal College of Art; how many requests he has received to meet those opposed to the decision of the council's planning committee; what plans he has to call in the council's planning decision; and if he will make a statement. [176698]

Keith Hill: My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister has received over 10,000 representations, the majority of which objected to the proposal by the Royal College of Art for an extension building, known as the "Ellipse". A number of requests were also received to meet those opposed to the proposal but it is not standard practice to do so when a planning application is formally before my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister for consideration on whether it should be called in. The hon. Member will be interested to know that my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister called in these proposals on 19 May 2004. A copy of the decision will be made available in the Library of the House.

Firefighters' Dispute

Mr. Weir: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what action he has taken to bring the sides together to discuss the difficulties encountered with the agreement to end the firefighters' dispute; [177029]

(2) what discussions he has had with the employers' organisations regarding fulfilling the obligations undertaken to end the firefighters' dispute. [177030]

Mr. Raynsford: My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister has had no such discussions and taken no such action. The June 2003 agreement, which ended the firefighters' dispute, set out a clear path for pay improvement linked to modernisation of the Fire and Rescue Service subject to some further negotiations. I understand that discussions between the employee representatives and their employers are continuing. Negotiation is clearly the way forward.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what representations he has received regarding difficulties with the agreement which ended the firefighters' dispute. [177031]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has received a handful of representations on these issues both directly and through ministerial colleagues and constituency MPs. Letters originated from members of the public, serving members of the Fire and Rescue Service and the Fire Brigades Union. In addition, Andy Gilchrist, General Secretary of the Fire Brigades Union wrote to all Members of Parliament on 17 May 2004 setting out the Union's views on the detailed negotiations with employers following the June 2003 pay and conditions agreement.

High Hedges

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he has taken to inform members of the public about how they can participate in the consultation on high hedges. [176912]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister issued a press release launching the public consultation on the high hedges legislation on 29 March. The announcement was covered in three national and a number of local newspapers, by national radio stations and some regional TV. The consultation package has been sent to a number of organisations with a special interest, for example, Hedgeline, the Consumer's Association, the National Consumer Council, the National Federation of Consumer Groups, the Royal Horticultural Society and the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux. It is also available on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website and on UK Online.

Homelessness

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average number of homeless households living in temporary accommodation was in each year since 1997, broken down by accommodation type. [173736]

Yvette Cooper: The most recent quarterly Statistical Release on homelessness was published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on 15 March, which contains information up to and including the fourth quarter of 2003. Table 7 (as follows) presents estimates of the number of homeless households in England in various types of temporary accommodation as at the end of each quarter since 1997.

Table 7: Households in accommodation arranged by local authorities under the homelessness provisions of the 1985 and 1996 Housing Acts, by type of accommodation [1]

		Bed and breakfast hotels			*Hostels/women's refuges*		
			Percentage			*Percentage*	
1985 and 1996 Housing Acts	*Total number of households accommodated at end of quarter*	*Number*	*of total*	*change on previous quarter*	*Number*	*of total*	*change on previous quarter*
1997							
quarter 1	41,250	4,100	9.9	-1.4	9,680	23.5	0.4
quarter 2	43,720	4,500	10.3	9.8	9,430	21.6	-2.6
quarter 3	45,290	4,630	10.2	2.9	9,450	20.9	0.2
quarter 4	44,870	4,520	10.1	-2.4	8,730	19.5	-7.6
1998							
quarter 1	47,520	4,820	10.1	6.6	9,730	20.5	11.5
quarter 2	49,390	5,380	10.9	11.6	9,490	19.2	-2.5
quarter 3	52,510	5,890	11.2	9.5	9,820	18.7	3.5
quarter 4	53,790	7,240	13.5	22.9	9,760	18.1	-0.6
1999							
quarter 1	56,580	6,570	11.6	-9.3	9,840	17.4	0.8
quarter 2	58,430	7,700	13.2	17.2	10,210	17.5	3.8
quarter 3	61,450	8,240	13.4	7.0	9,960	16.2	-2.4
quarter 4	62,180	8,000	12.9	-2.9	9,660	15.5	-3.0
2000							
quarter 1	65,170	8,680	13.3	8.5	10,300	15.8	6.6
quarter 2	67,520	8,910	13.2	2.6	10,320	15.3	0.2
quarter 3	71,860	9,420	13.1	5.7	10,460	14.6	1.4
quarter 4	73,080	9,870	13.5	4.8	10,790	14.8	3.2
2001							
quarter 1	75,200	10,860	14.4	10.0	10,610	14.1	-1.7
quarter 2[2]	75,920	11,390	15.0	4.9	10,320	13.6	-2.7
quarter 3[2]	78,370	12,240	15.6	7.5	10,400	13.3	0.8
quarter 4[2]	78,030	11,890	15.2	-2.9	9,850	12.6	-5.3
2002							
quarter 1[2,3]	80,440	11,840	14.7	-0.4	9,610	11.9	-2.4
quarter 2[2,3]	82,110	12,380	15.1	4.6	9,760	11.9	1.6
quarter 3[2,3]	85,260	13,250	15.5	7.0	9,740	11.4	-0.2
quarter 4[2,3]	83,860	12,540	15.0	-5.4	9,640	11.5	-1.0
2003							
quarter 1[2,3]	89,260	12,100	13.6	-3.5	10,070	11.3	4.5
quarter 2[2,3]	91,330	11,340	12.4	-6.3	10,420	11.4	3.5
quarter 3[2,3]	93,930	10,310	11.0	-9.1	10,770	11.5	3.4
quarter 4[2,3]	95,060	8,360	8.8	-18.9	10,230	10.8	-5.0

	Private sector accommodation (eg on lease or licence, or direct with landlord)			*Other types including local authorities' and RSL's own stock*		
		Percentage			*Percentage*	
	Number	*of total*	*change on previous quarter*	*Number*	*of total*	*change on previous quarter*
1997						
quarter 1	14,040	34.0	27.9	13,430	32.6	-22.9
quarter 2	14,300	32.7	1.9	15,490	35.4	75.3
quarter 3	14,310	31.6	0.1	16,900	37.3	9.7
quarter 4	14,040	31.3	-1.9	17,580	39.2	4.0
1998						
quarter 1	14,820	31.2	5.6	18,150	38.2	3.2
quarter 2	15,470	31.3	4.4	19,050	38.6	5.0
quarter 3	18,280	34.8	18.2	18,520	35.3	-2.8

	Private sector accommodation (eg on lease or licence, or direct with landlord)			*Other types including local authorities' and RSL's own stock*		
		Percentage			*Percentage*	
	Number	*of total*	*change on previous quarter*	*Number*	*of total*	*change on previous quarter*
quarter 4	17,400	32.3	-4.8	19,390	36.0	4.7
1999						
quarter 1	19,270	34.1	10.7	20,900	36.9	7.8
quarter 2	17,670	30.2	-8.3	22,850	39.7	9.3
quarter 3	18,460	30.0	4.5	24,790	40.3	8.5
quarter 4	19,820	31.9	7.4	24,700	39.7	-0.4
2000						
quarter 1	20,060	30.8	1.2	26,130	40.1	5.8
quarter 2	23,920	35.4	19.2	24,370	36.1	-6.7
quarter 3	22,330	31.1	-6.6	29,650	41.3	21.7
quarter 4	25,260	34.6	13.1	27,160	37.2	-8.4
2001						
quarter 1	25,610	34.1	1.4	28,120	37.4	3.5
quarter 2[2]	25,890	34.1	1.1	28,320	37.3	0.7
quarter 3[2]	25,630	32.7	-1.0	30,100	38.4	6.3
quarter 4[2]	25,740	33.0	0.4	30,550	39.2	1.5
2002						
quarter 1[2,3]	28,370	35.3	10.2	30,620	38.1	0.2
quarter 2[2,3]	29,860	36.4	5.3	30,130	36.7	-1.6
quarter 3[2,3]	31,880	37.4	6.8	30,390	35.6	0.9
quarter 4[2,3]	34,100	40.7	7.0	27,590	32.9	-9.2
2003						
quarter 1[2,3]	37,180	41.7	9.0	29,920	33.5	8.4
quarter 2[2,3]	40,550	44.4	9.1	29,000	31.8	-3.1
quarter 3[2,3]	43,880	46.7	8.2	28,980	30.9	-0.1
quarter 4[2,3]	47,290	49.7	7.8	29,190	30.7	0.7

[1] Households in accommodation arranged by local authorities pending inquiries or after being accepted as homeless under the 1996 Act (includes residual cases awaiting re-housing under the 1985 Act).
[2] Provisional
[3] Some self-contained accommodation in Annex-style units previously recorded under B&B now more appropriately attributed to private sector accommodation.
Note:
The totals may not equal the sum of components because of rounding

Regional Government

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how he has told people in *(a)* the North West, *(b)* Lancashire and *(c)* Chorley about the referendum on regional government; and how much has been spent on informing people of the referendum on regional government in (i) the North West, (ii) Lancashire and (iii) Chorley. [177149]

Mr. Raynsford: The Government's "Your Say" information campaign has been running in the three northern regions since November 2003.

In the North West this has included issue of the "Your Say—A New Opportunity for the North West" leaflet in November 2003, available at no charge from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Free Literature, from the Government Office for the North West and at regional events, such as the recent hearings on elected regional assemblies. 552,000 copies were distributed as inserts in 19 free sheet newspapers across Lancashire and Cumbria. There were three hearings in the North West, at Blackburn, Liverpool and Kendal. Ministers have also visited the North West as part of cross-regional tours in inform voters of our policy and on other occasions.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister also intends to send a leaflet to every household in the North West prior to the proposed referendum so that voters are fully informed of our policy on elected assemblies and the associated local government restructuring.

The cost of the 'Your Say' information campaign is not broken down by region, county or town. It has a budget of £5 million across all three regions.

Secondments

Norman Baker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the secondees from outside organisations working in his Department, stating in each case *(a)* the name of the person, *(b)* the name of the organisation, *(c)* the post held and *(d)* the start and finish dates of the secondment; and which are involved in drafting parliamentary answers. [158049]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is in the table. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not routinely publish the names and personal details of individual employees, in order to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act. While on secondment,

secondees are subject to Civil Service terms and conditions, and are expected to undertake the full range of duties attached to the post, including the provision of drafts for Parliamentary Questions if required.

Organisation	Posting	Start		End	
		Year	Month	Year	Month
Accord Plc.	Local Government Quality	2001	3 September	2006	30 September
Alien Associates Ltd.	Strategic Partnering Taskforce	2002	1 November	2004	31 March
Audit Commission (NDPB)	Neighbourhood Renewal Unit	2003	28 April	2004	31 March
Australian Government	New Growth Area	2003	14 July	2004	13 July
Avon Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2003	11 August	2005	11 August
Babtie Group Ltd.	Strategic Service Delivery Partnership Taskforce (LGQ)	2001	3 September	2004	31 March
Basildon District Council	Thames Gateway Strategic Executive	2001	23 July	2005	23 July
Beds and Luton Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2001	17 April	2004	31 July
Birmingham City Council	Neighbourhood Renewal Unit	2004	2 February	2004	30 July
Bracknell Forest Council	Local Government Capacity and Modernisation Division	2003	3 March	2005	3 November
Bradford MDC	Housing Directorate	2002	4 February	2006	31 March
Bradford MDC	Local Government Practice Division	2003	30 June	2006	29 June
British Urban Regeneration Association	Planning, Housing and Growth Division	2003	17 February	2005	16 February
Building Research Establishment	Building Regulation Division	2003	1 July	2005	30 June
Busha Global Ltd.	Neighbourhood Renewal Unit	2003	28 April	2005	31 March
Calderdale MBC	Community Housing Task Force	2001	14 May	2005	13 May
Cambridgeshire County Council	Local Government Capacity and Modernisation Division	2003	6 May	2005	5 May
Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2002	30 September	2004	29 September
Capacity	Neighbourhood Renewal Unit	2002	16 October	2004	31 October
Cheshire Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Services Inspectorate Fire Service Improvement Team	2003	18 August	2004	30 April
Cheshire Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2002	1 November	2004	14 April
City of York Council	Local Government Practice Division	2003	30 June	2006	29 June
Cleveland Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2002	21 October	2004	20 July
Cleveland Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2003	11 August	2005	12 August
CPEA Ltd.	Local Government	2002	13 May	2004	31 March
Croydon Council	Regional Economic Performance Division	2003	6 May	2004	31 July
Denison Associates Limited	Local Government Capacity and Modernisation Division	2003	2 April	2004	1 April
ED AW Plc.	Liveability and Sustainable Communities Division	2004	5 January	2004	2 July
Elmbridge Borough Council	Bed and Breakfast Unit	2003	17 February	2004	31 March
ENCAMS	Neighbourhood Renewal Unit	2003	1 May	2004	31 March
Essex County Council	Thames Gateway Strategic Executive	2001	14 May	2005	1 April
Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2003	1 November	2004	31 March
Greater Manchester County Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2002	14 October	2004	13 April
Greater Manchester County Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2003	19 October	2004	31 March
Greater Manchester County Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2002	2 January	2004	30 September
Hampshire Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2003	1 December	2004	30 November
Hampshire Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2003	14 March	2004	13 March
HAS	Social Exclusion Unit	2003	18 August	2004	18 June
Help the Aged	Social Exclusion Unit	2003	1 April	2004	1 April
Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2001	5 November	2004	4 November
Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue	Operational Practices, HMFSI	2004	1 February	2006	31 January
Idea	Housing Care and Support	2003	12 May	2005	10 May
IPPR	Social Exclusion Unit	2003	16 June	2004	18 June
Kent County Council	Housing Management Division	2003	15 September	2004	31 July
Kent County Council	Thames Gateway Strategic Executive	2001	19 March	2004	31 March
Kent Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2002	1 August	2004	1 August
Kent Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2001	1 December	2004	30-November
Knowsley Borough Council	Local Government Modernisation	2001	1 July	2005	31 December
Lambeth County Council	Community Housing Task Force	2001	9 July	2005	31 May
Lancashire Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2002	3 January	2005	02 January
London Thames Gateway Forum	Planning Legislation Implementation	2002	20 August	2004	20 August
Leicestershire Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2003	1 June	2004	31 May
Liberata Plc.	Local Government Capacity	2003	1 August	2004	31 March
Local Government Association	Local Government Strategy Unit	2003	29 December	2004	31 December
Local Government Ombudsman	Planning Control Casework	2002	4 November	2004	28 May
London Borough of Camden	Social Exclusion Unit	2003	3 November	2004	7 May
London Borough of Enfield	Urban Policy Unit 2	2003	30 June	2004	31 March
London Borough of Southwark	Local Government Strategy Unit	2004	1 March	2005	28 February
London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2004	12 January	2004	31 March
London Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2003	16 June	2004	15 June
London Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2002	7 January	2004	6 January
London Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2003	1 February	2004	31 March
London Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2002	16 September	2004	15 September
London Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2001	4 June	2004	3 June
London Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2001	1 June	2004	31 May
London Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2003	1 April	2004	31 July
London Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2002	18 February	2005	17 February
London Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2001	7 January	2005	6 January

Organisation	Posting	Start Year	Start Month	End Year	End Month
London Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2001	3 September	2004	2 September
London Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2001	1 February	2005	31 January
London Voluntary Service Council	Neighbourhood Renewal Unit	2001	1 October	2005	30 July
Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2002	21 October	2004	20 July
Manchester Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2003	13 May	2004	12 May
Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service	HM Fire Services Inspectorate	2003	13 October	2004	31 May
Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2003	16 June	2004	15 June
National Housing Federation	Neighbourhood Renewal Unit	2002	1 October	2004	30 September
NCYVS	Equality and Diversity Unit	2003	20 October	2004	23 April
New Economics Foundation	Local Government Capacity and Modernisation Division	2003	2 April	2004	30 April
New Islington and Hackney Housing Association	Equality and Diversity Unit	2003	15 September	2004	19 March
Newham Council	Local Government Quality	2002	21 January	2004	23 July
North East Assembly	Fire, Health & Safety Division	2003	30 June	2004	31 March
Nottingham County Council	Fire Service Improvement Team	2004	16 March	2004	30 September
Ofsted	Neighbourhood Renewal Unit	2003	1 September	2004	1 September
One North East	Social Exclusion Unit	2003	10 November	2004	7 May
PEP Ltd. (Priority Estate Project)	Neighbourhood Renewal Unit	2001	18 June	2005	30 June
Pricewaterhousecoopers	Local Government Quality	2001	3 September	2004	31 March
Railtrack	HM Fire Services	2001	16 July	2004	3 September
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea	Homelessness Directorate	2003	17 October	2004	30 April
Safer Merthyr Tydfil	Neighbourhood Renewal Unit	2000	1 May	2005	3 April
South Wales Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2003	13 October	2004	12 October
South Wales Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2003	1 June	2004	3 May
South Wales Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2003	6 January	2004	20 July
South Wales Fire Service HQ	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2001	6 July	2004	6 July
South West Development Agency	Neighbourhood Renewal Unit	2003	13 January	2004	30 June
South West London and St. George's Mental Health Trust	Social Exclusion Unit	2003	26 August	2004	25 September
South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2003	14 April	2004	16 April
South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2001	6 July	2006	6 July
SPLASH	Neighbourhood Renewal Unit	2003	3 February	2005	2 February
Sport England	Community Participation-Implementation	2002	11 November	2004	10 November
Staffordshire Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2003	16 June	2004	9 June
Stonham Housing Association	Social Exclusion Unit	2003	28 April	2004	25 June
Strategic Rail Authority	Fire Service Structure Team	2003	27 August	2005	26 August
Strathclyde Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2002	21 October	2004	20 July
Suffolk Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2001	6 July	2004	6 July
Surrey Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2003	24 March	2004	31 March
Sussex Police	Neighbourhood Renewal Unit	2003	21 July	2005	22 July
Tower Hamlets	Thames Gateway Strategic Executive	2001	2 April	2004	30 September
Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2002	21 October	2004	20 July
Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2003	1 June	2004	31 May
University of East London	Thames Gateway Strategic Executive	2002	20 May	2004	19 May
University of Westminster	Neighbourhood Renewal Unit	2003	15 November	2004	14 May
Urban Projects	Neighbourhood Renewal Unit	2003	8 July	2004	7 July
Warwickshire Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2003	1 May	2005	30 April
West Midland Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2003	7 March	2004	31 March
West Midlands Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2003	1 March	2005	31 March
West Midlands Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2003	1 December	2004	2 April
West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service	Fire Service Effectiveness Directorate	2003	6 October	2004	30 September
West Sussex Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2003	9 February	2005	31 March
West Sussex Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2001	15 January	2006	14 January
West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue	HM Fire Service Inspectorate	2003	16 June	2004	15 June

TRANSPORT

Aircraft Seats

Mr. John Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to implement the recommendation of the ICE Ergonomics Ltd. Report of July 2001 commissioned by the Joint Aviation Authorities concerning the seat pitch on British passenger aircraft. [177147]

Mr. McNulty: On 28 September 2003 the European Safety Agency (EASA) assumed responsibility for the design standards of most aircraft manufactured and operated in the European Union. This includes standards for airline seat spacing. At the suggestion of the Joint Aviation Authorities (JAA), an investigation of all seat pitch issues has been added to the EASA rulemaking programme for 2005 onwards. It is expected that the EASA investigation will take full account of the ICE Ergonomics Ltd. report of July 2001.

Crime (Public Transport)

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many crimes were committed on London Underground in each year since 1997; and how many were *(a)* assaults, *(b)* of a sexual nature and *(c)* robberies. [175461]

Mr. McNulty *[pursuant to the reply, 7 June 2004, Official Report, c. 69–70W]:* The British Transport Police (BTP) have provided corrected information on

crimes recorded on London Underground in each year since 1998; information is not readily available for earlier than 1998.

	Assaults	*Sexual offences*	*Robberies*	*Passenger trips (million)*
1998–99	1,302	425	597	866
1999–2000	1,424	362	643	927
2000–01	1,234	393	591	970
2001–02	1,168	336	783	953
2002–03	1,543	340	535	942
2003–04	1,834	357	502	947

Departmental Administration Budget

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress has been made towards the five per cent. reduction in real terms in his Department's administration budget by 2008 announced by the Chancellor in the House on 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 331. [176509]

Mr. McNulty: The real terms reduction of 5 per cent. or more will be a central feature of the public spending settlements for 2006–08 to be announced in detail later this year.

Race Equality Scheme

Mr. Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will report progress on each of the bullet points on page 20 of the Department's Race Equality Scheme 2003–05. [176820]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* In complying with the specific duties of Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 relating to employment, the Department has some monitoring systems in place, and where they are not, we are setting them up for any areas where monitoring has lapsed. We are monitoring by ethnic group applicants seeking employment by:

the number of applications for employment;

the numbers dropping out at different stages of the recruitment process;

the numbers selected;

the numbers successful and unsuccessful at different stages of selection; and

the numbers accepting job offers.

We also ask applicants to let us know where they found out about our vacancies.

As regards staff working within the Department, we monitor by ethnic group, and gender:

the numbers of staff in post;

applicants for training;

numbers receiving training;

applicants for promotion, numbers selected, and numbers successful and unsuccessful at different stages of the process;

appraisal mark distributions;

distribution of performance-related pay or bonuses;

harassment and discrimination complaints;

those involved in grievances and disciplinary procedures; and

ceased employment.

Where analysis of this monitoring reveals any disparities, we will take appropriate action to address concerns. The results of monitoring, and impact of action taken to address issues identified will be reported to the Departmental Management Board.

The Department reviewed its recruitment processes between November 2003 to January 2004. The findings are yet to be analysed, however, once analysis has taken place we will carry out implementation as appropriate.

We have delivered training events on race awareness for staff involved interviewing and chairing for recruitment and promotions. In addition to this, we have held race equality impact assessment training for key staff, and race equality is featured in our Valuing Diversity programme of events being run throughout 2004.

In 2003, we delivered diversity awareness workshops for untrained staff. The workshops were designed to challenge some of the stereotypes and misconceptions some managers might have about the ability of minority ethnic staff. We set up a Steering Group, with representation from the trade unions and our minority ethnic staff support network, to develop a career development programme for minority ethnic staff. It is hoped that the programme, to be launched early in 2005, might have some impact in helping to address their under-representation in more senior grades.

The Department conducted a staff survey in November 2003. Among the outcomes were that 64 per cent. of black staff felt that they were treated with dignity and respect, compared to 76 per cent. of white employees although these differences are not statistically significant. Compared to benchmarking data on race, the Department for Transport performs well against other public sector organisations in those who claimed to have been unfairly treated on account of their race. The departmental figure is 3 per cent. below the benchmark.

The survey also showed that black and Asian staff seem to be more likely to agree that they like working in the Department, but would prefer an alternative job within it (40 per cent. black staff and 47 per cent. Asian staff compared to 23 per cent. of white staff).

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Computer File Formats

Mr. Allan: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her Department's policy is in respect of the computer file formats used for the *(a)* distribution and *(b)* archiving of publicly available documents. [173359]

Alun Michael: Defra's main method for placing documents in the public domain is our online Publication Scheme, which can be found on the Defra website at http://defraweb/corporate/opengov/pubscheme/index.htm. A range of standard web file formats are used for these

documents; primarily Portable Document Format (.pdf), Hypertext Markup Language (.html) and Active Server Pages (.asp).

Documents that are created electronically but are distributed to the public via other methods are stored in their native file format. Typically this will be one of the Microsoft Office formats such as Word (.doc) Excel (.xls) or PowerPoint (.ppt).

These documents are placed on a registered file, in hard copy, to form part of our official public record, as mandated by The National Archive. Currently Defra does not have an accredited electronic archive, although plans are in development for a future implementation.

Departmental Administration Budget

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the *(a)* staffing and *(b)* staff costs for the Environment Agency are for 2004–05 in respect of its activities on (i) central administration, (ii) flood defence, (iii) water resources, (iv) environmental protection, licensing activities, (v) environmental protection, non-licensing activities, (vi) fisheries, (vii) recreation and conservations (viii) navigation and (ix) other activities. [176407]

Alun Michael: The Environment Agency's current staff numbers and costs for each function are set out in the following table.

Environment Agency	*Full time equivalent staff*	*Annual staff costs (£000)*
Central Administration	279	8,841
Flood Defence	4,071	126,450
Water Resources	1,233	39,078
Environmental Protection	3,752	118,176
Fisheries	499	15,823
Recreation and Conservation	189	4,174
Navigation	109	4,685
Other Activities	928	41,654
Total	11,060	358,881

The Agency is not able to distinguish between environmental protection staff working on licensing activities and those working on non-licensing activities. Most staff in Environmental Protection functions undertake both duties depending on need.

"Central Administration" is defined as Head Office Finance, Human Resources, Facilities, Operational Co-ordination, Payroll and other exchequer services and Audit.

"Other Activities" comprise mainly Corporate Information Systems, National Laboratory Service, Legal, Estates and Procurement.

Staff costs include travel and subsistence.

Gender Pay Gap

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the pay gap between men and women employed by her Department and its agencies in *(a)* Southampton, *(b)* Eastleigh, *(c)* Winchester and *(d)* Romsey. [171633]

Alun Michael: In response to the Equal Opportunities Task Force report "Just Pay", the Government committed all departments and agencies to undertake an equal pay review by April 2003 and to prepare action plans to close any equal pay gaps. Consequently, an equal pay audit of the Core Defra, Pesticides Safety Directorate and Veterinary Medicines Directorate pay system was carried out, the results of which revealed that there were no significant inequalities in pay for staff in these locations. There are 17 Core-Defra staff employed in offices in Southampton and Winchester.

Of my Department's other agencies, only the Veterinary Laboratories Agency (VLA) and the Central Science Laboratory (CSL) have staff in these locations. The VLA has 33 staff and CSL has three staff based in or near Winchester. Both agencies have carried out equal pay audits of their pay systems. The CSL audit did not identify any pay inequalities. The Chief Executive of the VLA will reply to the hon. Member separately.

Honours

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much time her Department spent dealing with honours in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by Civil Service grade. [173038]

Alun Michael: For the period April 2003 to January 2004 the Departmental Honours team consisted of a full-time Honours Secretary graded at a Higher Executive Officer (HEO) supported by two full-time Administrative Officers (AO's).

From February 2004 the Departmental Honours team has been re-organised and is now a full-time Honours Secretary who is an Executive Officer (EO) supported by one full-time Administrative Officer (AO).

The Honours Secretary is involved with the twice-yearly Departmental Honours sift with the Permanent Secretary and other senior officials.

The majority of the work on honours is undertaken by the Departmental Honours team. Information is not available on time spent on honours related work, by departmental staff who are not members of the Departmental Honours team.

Public Bodies

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the *(a)* total budget and *(b)* budget for administration were for the

(i) Agricultural Wage Committee, (ii) Agricultural Dwelling House Advisory Committee, (iii) Consumers' Committee for Great Britain, (iv) Committee of Agricultural Valuation, (v) Committee of Investigation for Great Britain, (vi) Commons Commissioners and (vii) Hill Farming Advisory Committee in financial year 2003–04. [176273]

Alun Michael: Details of the total budget and budget for administration for 2003–04 for the NDPBs requested is as follows.

	Total costs budget	*Administrative costs budget*	*Comments*
Agricultural Wage Committee	35,000	No separate budget	—
Agricultural Dwelling House Advisory Committee	44,000	No separate budget	—
Consumers' Committee for Great Britain	0	0	This NDPB is dormant
Committee of Agricultural Valuation	0	0	This NDPB is dormant
Committee of Investigation for Great Britain	0	0	This NDPB is Dormant
Commons Commissioners	30,000	30,000	—
Hill Farming Advisory Committee	0	0	Dormant

Note:
Advisory and Tribunal NDPBs—Administrative Costs
Administration costs for advisory and tribunal NDPBs Include the costs of board members (fees and expenses) and any associated direct costs of running the NDPB. It does not include the costs of the secretariats within Defra.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the *(a)* total budget and *(b)* budget for administration were for the (i) Dairy Produce Quota Tribunal, (ii) Horticultural Development Council, (iii) Home Grown Cereals Authority, (iv) Meat and Livestock Commission, (v) Forum on Non-Food Uses of Crops, (vi) Advisory Committee on Organic Standards and (vii) Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment in the financial year 2003–04. [176286]

Alun Michael: Details of the total budget and budget for administration for 2003–04 for the NDPBs requested is as follows:

	Total costs budget	*Administrative costs budget*	*Comments*
Dairy Produce Quota Tribunal	0	0	Activities on hold
Horticultural Development Council	3,900,000	293,300	—
Home Grown Cereals Authority	10,167,000	582,000	—
Meat and Livestock Commission	36,946,000	2,064,000	—
Forum on Non-Food Uses of Crops	150,000	No separate budget	—
Advisory Committee on Organic Standards	167,000	167,000	—
Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment	40,000	40,000	—

Notes:
Executive NDPBs—Administrative Costs
Both management accounting practices and the definition of administration costs differ from organisation to organisation. Therefore comparisons between NDPBs may not be appropriate.
Advisory and Tribunal NDPBs—Administrative Costs
Administration costs for advisory and tribunal NDPBs include the costs of board members (fees and expenses) and any associated direct costs of running the NDPB. It does not include the costs of the secretariats within Defra.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the *(a)* total budget and *(b)* budget for administration was for the (i) Independent Scientific Group on Cattle TB, (ii) Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee, (iii) Veterinary Products Committee, (iv) Plant Varieties and Seeds Tribunal, (v) Integrated Administration and Control Systems Panel, (vi) Agricultural Land Tribunals and (vii) Veterinary Residues Committee in financial year 2003–04. [176298]

Alun Michael: Details of the total budget and budget for administration for 2003–04 for the NDPBs requested is as follows:

	Total costs budget	*Administrative costs budget*	*Comments*
Independent Scientific Group on Cattle TB	124,000	124,000	—
Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee	290,029	No separate budget available	—
Veterinary Products Committee	149,000	149,000	—
Plant Varieties and Seeds Tribunal	0	0	This NDPB has not met since 1984 and therefore has not incurred costs
Integrated Administration and Control Systems Panel	Costs met from overall Rural Payments Agency budget	Costs met from overall Rural Payments Agency budget	This NDPB is demand led. The levels of expenditure are determined by the throughput
Agricultural Land Tribunals	30,000	30,000	—
Veterinary Residues Committee	18,000	18,000	—

Note:
Advisory and Tribunal NDPBs—Administration Costs
Administration costs for advisory and tribunal NDPBs include the costs of board members (fees and expenses) and any associated direct costs of running the NDPB. It does not include the costs of the secretariats within Defra.

Thames Barrier

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions her Department has held with the Government's Chief Scientific Adviser on the reasons for increased use of the Thames Barrier. [176484]

Mr. Morley: There have been no direct discussions between Defra and the Chief Scientific Adviser (CSA) on the specific issue of the usage of the Thames Barrier. However, Defra has provided assistance in sourcing material for the CSA to use in papers on a variety of subjects including the Thames barrier usage.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Adult Education

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment the Government has made of the benefits of non-academic adult education; and if he will make a statement. [177277]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Department has completed a number of studies that look at the benefits of non-academic or leisure based adult education courses. These include work by the DfES-funded Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning, published on their website at www.learningbenefits.net and the results from the first sweep of a DfES commissioned tracking survey of 1,900 learners who have participated in Adult and Community Learning to be published by the DfES on 24 June.

The results from both areas of work confirm the positive impact of adult learning e.g. on health and civic participation and on the individual's confidence and motivation to undertake further learning. That is why we remain committed to safeguarding a varied range of learning opportunities for personal fulfilment, community development and active citizenship.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding has been allocated to each local council in 2004–05 for the purposes of adult education. [177278]

Alan Johnson: The Department allocates funds for education and training in the post-16 learning and skills sector to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The LSC decides the funding allocated to local education authorities and other providers. Information about these allocations is not collected by the Department. This is an operational matter and the responsibility of the LSC. Mark Haysom, the LSC's Chief Executive, will write to the hon. Member with this information and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many investigators are employed by the Adult Learning Inspectorate; [176339]

(2) how many deaths have been investigated by the Adult Learning Inspectorate since its creation; [176341]

(3) how many bullying incidents have been investigated by the Adult Learning Inspectorate since its creation; [176342]

(4) what training in military procedures and weapons handling is planned in order to prepare the Adult Learning Inspectorate for its role in inspecting military bases. [176343]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: These are matters for the Adult Learning Inspectorate. David Sherlock, the Chief Inspector, will write to my hon. Friend with this information and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the budget is of the Adult Learning Inspectorate in 2004–05; and what funds have been set aside to inspect military establishments. [176340]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The annual budget of the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was set out in the Secretary of State's Grant Letter issued on 16 December 2003. This Grant Letter provides the Inspectorate with up to £24.2 million from the Department for Education and Skills, and a further £5.75 million from the Department for Work and Pensions/Jobcentre Plus, for 2004–05. There is no funding specifically set aside for the inspection agreement between the ALI and Ministry of Defence (MoD) because this is commissioned work, which will be funded on a full cost recovery basis by the MoD.

Drug and Alcohol Misuse

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils were excluded from secondary school because of *(a)* drug-related and *(b)* alcohol-related behaviour in each year since 1997. [176623]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: My Department started to collect data on the reasons for exclusions, including drug and alcohol related incidents, from summer term 2003. There are concerns about the reliability of the first term's data but initial findings are expected to be released within the next few weeks. The first set of annual figures, relating to 2003/04, will not be available until 2005.

DEFENCE

BAE Systems

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress is being made in the investigation by the Ministry of Defence police into allegations that a member of the Saudi armed forces project of the Ministry of Defence was provided with free holidays and gifts by BAE Systems between 2000 and 2002; and if he will make a statement. [176052]

Mr. Hoon: The Ministry of Defence Police investigation is continuing and I am therefore unable to comment on progress.

Iraq

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the status of detainees held by UK

forces under Article 78 of the IV Geneva Convention (1949) will be after the transfer of Iraqi sovereignty on 30 June; and if he will make a statement. [173909]

Mr. Hoon *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* We will not be detaining anyone under Article 78 of the IV Geneva Convention after 30 June. The United Kingdom will cease to be the occupying power on 30 June and Article 78 of the IV Geneva Convention will no longer be relevant. The case of each of the 125 security internees currently being held is reviewed regularly and those no longer posing an imperative threat to security are released. Post 30 June detention policy will need to be discussed with the Iraqi Interim Government.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps his Department is taking to provide the British public with information on the abuse of Iraqi prisoners. [173227]

Mr. Hoon: The Ministry of Defence provides as much information as it is able to through the media and Parliament. Where allegations are subject to investigations and potentially judicial proceedings, it is necessary to limit what is said in order not to prejudice that process.

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions Ministers had with *(a)* Coalition partners and *(b)* the armed forces, and when, about the handling of prisoners in Iraq. [173521]

Mr. Hoon: The handling of prisoners captured by UK forces in Iraq is determined by our obligations under the Geneva Conventions.

In March 2003, a Memorandum of Understanding was concluded by the US, UK and Australia dealing with the procedures for the transfer of custody of prisoners of war (PWs) between them. This covered not only PWs but all internees and detainees as well. It emphasises the importance of compliance with the relevant Geneva Conventions and customary international law. A copy was placed in the Library of the House on 15 November 2003.

Ministers have regular discussions with Coalition partners on a wide variety of issues concerning Iraq and I am withholding details of the discussions under Exemption 1 b of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. I am withholding details of the advice to Ministers from the Armed Forces under Exemption 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Medical Downgrading

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many personnel in all three services have been medically downgraded as a result of service in the Gulf since January 2003, broken down by reason for downgrading; and if he will make a statement. [176803]

Mr. Caplin: As of 20 December 2003, centrally held records show that 1,669 military personnel had been medically downgraded subsequent to their arrival in the Gulf region on deployment on Operation Telic. The main reasons for downgrading are as follows:

Causes of medical downgrading	*Number of military personnel medically downgraded*[1]
Musculoskeletal disorders	587
Injuries	468
Mental and behavioural disorders	140
Respiratory system disorders	87
Pregnancies	83
Other causes	294
Cause not recorded	10
Total	1,669

[1] Numbers of Service personnel deployed on Op Telic and subsequent medical downgradings during 2003 excludes Special Forces personnel.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Cultural Services Excellence Network

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport which councils have been included in the Cultural Services Excellence Network; and what the criteria for inclusion were. [176461]

Estelle Morris: The Cultural Services Excellence Network is an informal grouping hosted by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. The network is open to Cultural Beacon Councils, local authorities that have an "excellent" overall score in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment or perform well in the cultural and leisure services part of the assessment, and authorities that receive an excellent Best Value Inspection score in cultural services. The following councils currently meet the criteria, although not all choose to attend meetings:

Barnet London Borough Council
Birmingham City Council
Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Bromley London Borough Council
Camden London Borough Council
Cheshire County Council
Chichester District Council
City of London
Colchester Borough Council
Cornwall County Council
Derbyshire County Council
Dorset County Council
East Riding of Yorkshire Council
Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council
Greenwich London Borough Council
Hambleton District Council
Hampshire County Council
Hartlepool Borough Council
Hertfordshire County Council
Kensington and Chelsea Royal Borough Council
King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council
Kingston upon Thames, Royal Borough of
Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Leeds City Council
Liverpool City Council
New Forest District Council
Nottingham City Council

South Hams District Council
Stockton on Tees Borough Council
Suffolk Coastal District Council
Suffolk County Council
Sunderland City Council
Sutton London Borough Council
Telford and Wrekin Borough Council
Wandsworth London Borough Council
West Sussex County Council
Westminster London Borough Council
Worcestershire County Council.

Departmental Administration Budget

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what progress has been made towards the five per cent. reduction in real terms in her Department's administration budget by 2008 announced by the Chancellor in the House on 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 331. [176501]

Tessa Jowell: The real terms reduction of 5 per cent. or more will be a central feature of the public spending settlements for 2006–08 to be announced in detail later this year.

Honours

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much time her Department spent dealing with Honours in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by civil service grade. [173035]

Tessa Jowell: We have a centralised team dealing with Honours work, the complement of which for the year to 31 March 2004 was 10 per cent. of a Grade A post (Grade 7), two Grade Cs (EO) and three Grade Ds (AO). The team undertakes virtually all of the work on honours within the Department and information is not available on time spent by other staff who are not members of this team.

The input from senior civil service officials in the Department is estimated at 16 per cent. of one post.

Ministerial Travel

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the travel costs incurred *(a)* by her Department and its predecessors and *(b)* by each Minister within her Department, for each of the last 10 years. [175641]

Mr. Caborn: All official travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules contained in the Department's staff handbook and all ministerial travel is undertaken fully in accordance with the rules set out in the "Ministerial Code" and "Travel by Ministers", copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

In respect of overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The Government have also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Libraries of the House. These report information reaching back to 1995–96. Information for earlier years could be obtained only at disproportionate cost and in some cases will no longer be held. Information for 2003–04 will be published in due course.

The following table shows domestic ministerial and overall Departmental expenditure on travel and subsistence combined. An analysis on travel only is not recorded on the Department's accounting system and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

£

Financial year	*Departmental*	*Of which ministerial*
2003–04[1]	839,928.68	15,044.44
2002–03	876,636.96	24,719.22
2001–02	750,593.38	17,386.39
2000–01	807,806.27	31,931.38
1999–2000	755,429.32	24,539.59
1998–99	643,283.50	22,913.88
1997–98	582,564.51	11,697.81
1996–97	242,031.00	[2]
1995–96	280,104.00	[2]
1994–95	266,092.00	[2]

[1] Financial year 2003–04 costs are provisional pending finalisation of Department's annual accounts.
[2] Information for these years is not recorded separately.
Figures from Financial year 1994–95 to 1996–97 are only available on cash basis (rounded).

New Opportunities Fund (Stoke)

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money from the New Opportunities Fund was allocated to Stoke-on-Trent, North since 1997. [177633]

Estelle Morris: The New Opportunities Fund began making grants in 1999. The awards to Stoke-on-Trent, North are shown in the table.

Financial year	*Amount (£)*
1999–2000	49,050
2000–01	52,346
2001–02	12,381
2002–03	123,601
2003–04	0
2004–05	1,350

The information is freely available from the Department's searchable Lottery award database at www.lottery.culture.gsi.gov.uk, which uses information supplied by the Lottery distributors.

Royal Household/Royal Parks

Mr. Den Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much public funding has been received by *(a)* the Royal Household and *(b)* the Royal Parks in each year since 1979; how much the Government plan to spend for each year until 2005–06; and if she will make a statement. [175272]

Estelle Morris: The following is the information from 1991–92 when the Grant in Aid arrangements were established for Property Services for the Occupied Royal Palaces, and from the same date for the royal parks.

Amount of public funding given by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport

£million

	Royal parks	*The royal household*
1991–92	25.4	23.94
1992–93	22.8	23.16
1993–94	23.2	19.80
1994–95	23.8	20.54
1995–96	24.7	20.44
1996–97	23.4	19.61
1997–98	21.7	16.41
1998–99	23.72	15.81
1999–2000	30.06	15.64
2000–01	26.97	15.52
2001–02	41.97	16.03
2002–03	27.04	15.92
2003–04	30.68	16.57
2004–05[1]	28.03	14.97
2005–2006[1]	27.09	15.62

[1] Planned funding

In 1999 the royal household took over the maintenance of Marlborough House on behalf of the Department, and also took on responsibility for royal communications and information previously funded by the Central Office of Information.

Marlborough House is occupied by the Commonwealth Secretariat and this expenditure is not a cost of the monarchy. Therefore, the table above shows the amount of grant in aid to the royal household excluding Marlborough House from 1999–2006. The royal household received an additional grant in aid for Marlborough House in 1999–2000 of 0.47 million, 2000–2001 of 0.57 million and from 2001–2002 until 2005–06 of 0.59 million.

To allow earlier delivery of some major capital projects, grant-in-aid to the royal household for 2003–04 was increased by £0.75 million and a corresponding reduction has been made in the 2004–05 allocation. Without this rescheduling, funding would have been £16.41 million in 2003–04 and £16.31 million in 2004–05

The royal parks are administered by the Royal Parks Agency. The figures quoted are taken from the DCMS Annual Report 2004, Vol. 1, (CM 6220). Expenditure is reported on a full resource consumption basis from 1998–99, whereas earlier figures are on a cash basis. Expenditure in 2001–02 includes £18.6 million for impairment of the Agency's fixed assets following a change of valuation policy.

Television Licence

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations she has received about the TV licensing direct debit scheme; and if she will make a statement. [177488]

Estelle Morris: There is no single direct debit scheme for payment of the television licence fee; direct debit arrangements are available for the monthly and quarterly instalment schemes as well as for a single, annual payment. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport receives regular representations from hon. Members and members of the public about licence fee issues but does not keep a separate record of representations about direct debit arrangements.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Draft Bills

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Leader of the House how many Bills have been introduced as draft Bills. [175293]

Mr. Woolas *[pursuant to his reply, 25 May 2004, Official Report, c. 1479W]:* The number of draft Bills published in 2001–02 was seven, not six as indicated in error in my answer of 25 May.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Afghanistan

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent discussions he has had with the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief about the impact of the security situation on the distribution of aid. [176600]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID does not have regular meetings with the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief (ACBAR) on security but we receive regular briefings from the ACBAR NGO Security Office. These are available on www.acbar.org. ACBAR plays a valuable role in Afghanistan, both by coordinating NGO activity and by challenging the Afghan Government and donors through its advocacy work.

Africa

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps the Government are taking toward offering micro-generation technologies to poor African countries. [176844]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID does not promote particular technologies but supports initiatives that seek to increase reliable, affordable energy services that meet the needs of the poor. A number of micro technologies at the development stage in the UK have limited prospects in Africa because of problems with accessing secure primary energy supplies, particularly by the poor.

DFID has funded £3.6 million of research since 1992 for the development and promotion of more renewable energy supplies, especially for rural communities. This has covered a wide range of technologies, including wind, small hydropower, solar photovoltaic, solar thermal and biomass. DFID has also seconded experts and provided over £9 million of funding over and above UK contributions to the multilateral system to three relevant international initiatives. These are, the Global Village Energy Partnership, the European Union Energy Initiative for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development, and the World Bank Energy Trust Funds. These initiatives cover a range of suitable energy technologies and policy options that include micro technologies where appropriate.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Honours

Brian White: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much time his Department spent dealing with honours in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by civil service grade. [173034]

Mr. Lammy: We have a dedicated honours team consisting of a part time span 7 (senior executive officer), a span 4 (executive officer) and a part-time administrative support officer. Additionally, a number of departmental officials are involved in our internal sifting meetings. No formal records are kept of the time spent by officials on this work, but for the year ending 31 March 2004 we estimate the time spent by them at those meetings to have been as follows:

Grade	*Number of hours*
Senior civil service	66
Span 9 (grade 6)	2
Span 4	2

The majority of work on honours is undertaken by the departmental honours team. Information is not available on the time spent on honours-related work by departmental staff who are not members of the Department's honours team.

Legal Aid

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many solicitors' firms had legal aid departments in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [177571]

Mr. Lammy: From 1997–98 to 1999–2000 the number of solicitors' firms paid for civil and criminal legal aid work was:

	Number
1997–98	10,601
1998–99	10,751
1999–2000	10,518

From 2000–01 onwards the number of solicitors' offices holding civil and criminal contracts was:

	Civil	*Criminal*
2000–01	4,952	n/a
2001–02	4,932	2,910
2002–03	4,641	2,900
2003–04	4,301	2,669

The number of offices with contracts does not equal the total number of firms because some offices practised both civil and criminal legal aid before 2000–01, or now hold a contract in both civil and criminal law.

Before the introduction of contracting, (January 2000 for civil work and April 2001 for criminal work) any solicitors' firm could undertake legal aid work.

The reduction in the number of solicitors' firms undertaking legal aid work had little effect on capacity, since those solicitors' firms which withdrew tended to do little publicly funded work.

Magistrates

Virginia Bottomley: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the average age is of *(a)* male and *(b)* female magistrates in (i) Surrey, (ii) the South East and (iii) England. [177373]

Mr. Leslie: This information is not accurately available in the format requested. We are able to provide numbers of magistrates within age bands, but not divided by gender, in (i) Surrey:

Up to age 30: 0 magistrates
30–39: 10 magistrates
40–49: 68 magistrates
50–54: 67 magistrates
55–59: 90 magistrates
60–65: 87 magistrates
66+: 44 magistrates.

(ii) the South East. (The South East region is comprised of Kent, Surrey, West Sussex, East Sussex, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire):

Up to age 30: 0 magistrates
30–39: 126 magistrates
40–49: 546 magistrates
50–54: 581 magistrates
55–59: 1,004 magistrates
60–65: 846 magistrates
66+: 354 magistrates

(iii) England (including the Duchy of Lancaster):

Up to age 30: 22 magistrates
30–39: 968 magistrates
40–49: 4,377 magistrates
50–54: 4,401 magistrates
55–59: 7,343 magistrates
60–65: 7,004 magistrates
66+: 2,663 magistrates.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Afghanistan

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what assistance is provided by his Department for the training of *(a)* members of the judiciary and *(b)* the police force in Afghanistan; [177111]

(2) what support is provided by his Department to train *(a)* law enforcement officials, *(b)* members of the judiciary and *(c)* Government officials in Afghanistan on the protection of the rights of women. [177117]

Mr. Rammell: The UK funded two senior Afghan police officers to attend the International Commanders Course at the International Faculty at Bramshill in 2003. Two UK police trainers form part of the International Police Assistance Mission that has been

providing basic and conversion police training in Kabul since June 2003. In July 2003 a five-strong team of UK police advisers deployed to Kabul to establish Crime Scene Investigation Units for the Afghan police. A further five UK police mentors are currently being deployed to join the US-led Regional Police Training College in Mazar-e Sharif. All police training in Afghanistan supported by the UK includes an awareness of both human rights and gender issues.

Italy and UNDP lead work on judicial reform in Afghanistan, in conjunction with the Afghan Ministry of Justice. The UK contributed £1 million in 2002–03 to the UNDP Judicial Reform programme. In 2004–05 the Foreign and Commonwealth Office is providing £240,000 over two years to the Bar Human Rights Committee to train Afghan legal practitioners in human rights and women's rights advocacy.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the case for expanding protection by the International Security Assistance Force throughout Afghanistan. [177114]

Mr. Rammell: The international community, including the UK, is responding to the need for security throughout Afghanistan with increased commitments of troops and resources, including extension of the network of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs). Deploying additional PRTs is the key to expansion of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). The UK is at the forefront of this, having agreed to lead a second PRT and provide a Forward Support Base for all PRTs in the North. But ISAF expansion can only proceed once NATO's statement of requirements is fully met and we are pressing other nations to contribute the resources needed to meet existing shortfalls.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Afghanistan about the need to criminalise *(a)* rape, *(b)* the giving of girls in marriage as a means of dispute resolution and *(c)* the forcing of women and girls to marry against their consent in Afghanistan. [177116]

Mr. Rammell: The UK and other EU member states have regularly raised human rights issues, including the rights of women and girls with the Afghan Transitional Administration.

Women's rights in Afghanistan are protected by the new Constitution, ratified in January 2004. The Constitution contains specific articles on women's equality and rights to political participation. The Constitution also requires the Government to uphold its obligations under international law. Rape and forced marriage are both prohibited by Afghanistan's obligations under the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, both of which Afghanistan has ratified. It is important that these rights now be implemented in practice.

Practical improvements in women's rights require further progress on security and judicial reform. The UK provided £10 million in 2003–04 for training of the new Afghan National Army and US$4 million in 2003–04 for Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration of former combatants. In 2004–05 the Foreign and Commonwealth Office is providing £240,000 over two years to the Bar Council to train Afghan legal practitioners in human rights and women's rights advocacy.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what efforts he has made to achieve a change in the mandate of the provincial reconstruction teams in Afghanistan to focus exclusively on security. [177120]

Mr. Rammell: We have not sought to change the mandate of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs). They are not resourced to focus purely on security, nor is that their purpose. PRTs aim to extend the authority of the central Government by facilitating reconstruction and security sector reform. Although small in size, we believe that PRTs are succeeding in achieving this through the beneficial effect they have on the security environment in the areas in which they operate. This has certainly been borne out by our experience with the UK-led PRT in Mazar-e Sharif.

Australia

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Government of Australia about its withdrawal in March 2002 from the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea. [177424]

Mr. Rammell: In March 2002, Australia opted out of the compulsory dispute settlement procedures provided for in Section 2 of Part XV of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) for disputes concerning the interpretation or application of articles 15, 74 and 83 of UNCLOS relating to sea boundary delimitations or those involving historic bays or titles. This exception is provided for in Article 298*(1) (a)* of UNCLOS. Australia has not therefore withdrawn from the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) and there have been no discussions between the Foreign Secretary and the Government of Australia regarding any such withdrawal.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Australia about the economic implications of the International Unitisation Agreement for East Timor. [177425]

Mr. Rammell: The UK Government has not sought, and would not seek to become involved with this bilateral agreement between Timor-Leste and Australia.

Burma

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the participation of *(a)* Aung San Suu Kyi, *(b)* the National League for Democracy and *(c)* ethnic minorities are conditions of Burma's membership of the Asia Europe Meeting. [176899]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM) Foreign Ministers met on 17—18 April and discussed enlargement of ASEM, among other issues. WhileMinisters noted moves by the regime in Burma, including the release of some members of opposition parties, they agreed that they wanted to see further and

concrete progress in Burma. EU Foreign Ministers raised in particular the release of Aung San Suu Kyi from house arrest, and an open and inclusive National Convention with the participation of the National League for Democracy. Ministers therefore agreed to postpone a decision on Burma's membership of ASEM, to allow ASEM members to monitor progress in Burma and review the situation in June.

Butler Inquiry

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what papers his Department has submitted to Lord Butler's inquiry into intelligence on Iraq. [177072]

Mr. Rammell: As my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary made clear when he announced the establishment of the Review to the House on 3 February 2004, *Official Report*, columns 625–28, the Committee has access to all intelligence reports and assessments, and other relevant Government papers, and is able to call witnesses to give oral evidence in private.

Central Intelligence Agency

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which communications that the Government has received from the United States' Central Intelligence Agency since 1 May 1997 have been published; and whether the CIA has sought permission from the Government to make public communications received from the Government over that period. [176790]

Mr. Straw: The Central Intelligence Agency has published a large quantity and wide range of material since 1 May 1997. Some of this material has been passed to the British Government but records are not kept centrally. The CIA has on occasion sought permission to make public British Government information.

Guantanamo Bay

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on what dates his officials have visited British nationals detained at Guantanamo Bay; on what dates he received reports on the welfare of detainees; what representations he has made on behalf of the prisoners; and what action he took to make his concerns known to relatives or legal representatives of those detained. [177590]

Mr. Mullin: British officials have visited the British nationals detained at Guantanamo Bay on the following dates: 17–20 January 2002, 26 February-1 March 2002, 27–31 May 2002, 11–15 November 2002, 21–28 April 2003, 8–10 September 2003, 8–9 March 2004. The main points arising from these visits have been reported to Parliament.

Ministers are kept informed about the visits, as are the families of the detainees. Welfare issues are raised regularly with the US authorities.

Iran

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the report submitted by Iran to the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency on 21 May on Iran's Nuclear Programmes and Activities. [177073]

Mr. MacShane: Iran's report is confidential to the Board of Governors and it is for them to assess its contents, assisted by the Agency's experts, and compare the information contained in it with their own findings from their inspection activities in Iran.

Iraq

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether *(a)* the Geneva Conventions and *(b)* all other international humanitarian and human rights law instruments will continue to govern the actions of coalition forces in Iraq after June 30; and if he will make a statement. [176808]

Mr. Straw: The forces contributing to the Multi-National Force operating in Iraq after 30 June will act consistently with their obligations under applicable international law, including international humanitarian law.

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) if he will list the dates when Government *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials met Ahmed Chalabi; what was discussed on each occasion; and if he will make a statement; [176810]

(2) if he will make a statement on UK Government contact with Ahmed Chalabi and the Iraqi National Congress *(a)* prior to military action in Iraq and *(b)* subsequent to military action. [176811]

Mr. Straw: Since Ahmed Chalabi was appointed to the Iraqi Governing Council, there have been numerous meetings with him by UK officials, notably the UK Special Representative for Iraq, his staff, the Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Human Rights in Iraq and the UK Mission in New York. These meetings have covered a wide range of issues. The only formal ministerial meeting was with my noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, who met him during her visit to Baghdad in March 2004. They discussed the transition process and the Oil For Food programme. I was introduced to Ahmed Chalabi and had a brief conversation with him at a US Government reception in New York during UNGA week in September 2003.

Prior to Ahmed Chalabi's appointment to the Iraqi Governing Council, the only recorded meeting took place in New York, during October 2000, where he met officials from the UK Mission to discuss sanctions and human rights.

Prior to military action, the Iraqi National Congress was in effect a loose umbrella organisation for most of the Iraqi opposition in exile. There were numerous meetings between UK officials and members of the Iraqi National Congress, both prior to and subsequent to military action.

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the inclusion of material in the September 2002 dossier on Iraq originating from the Iraqi National Congress. [176812]

Mr. Straw: No part of the dossier on Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction published on 24 September 2002 relied upon information known to have originated from the Iraqi National Congress.

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has sought from the Coalition Provisional Authority of the *(a)* capacity and *(b)* population of prisons in (i) Iraq and (ii) Baghdad. [177208]

Mr. Rammell: There are currently 18 Iraqi prisons in operation in Iraq with a capacity of 5,500. They are under the jurisdiction of the Iraqi Correction Service (ICS), under the Ministry of Justice. Of these, 14 are in the Baghdad region. A further 16 facilities with a capacity of 23,000 are planned. The CPA Ministry of Justice team estimate the prison population nationwide to be approximately 4,000. This does not include prisoners of war, security internees or criminal detainees (held for the Iraqis) held in UK or US custody. These number around 9,000.

Israel

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what punitive measures against the Israeli Government are available to him for non-compliance with the human rights clauses of the EU-Israeli Association Agreement. [177219]

Mr. Rammell: The penalties available to the EU if a breach of the Agreement occurs, which would not result in denunciation of the Agreement, are outlined in Article 86 of the Agreement. This article establishes a dispute resolution mechanism. The first stage would be for the concerned party to report the issue to the Association Council. If the Association fails to resolve the issue, the concerned party could then invoke an arbitration process. The arbitrators would decide a judgment and each party would be bound by that judgment. Article 90 further allows for either party to take appropriate measures if it is felt that the other party had failed to fulfil an obligation under the Agreement.

Article 2 of the EU/Israel Association Agreement states that:

"Relations between the Parties, as well as all the provisions of the Agreement itself, shall be based on respect for human rights and democratic principles, which guides their internal and international policy and constitutes an essential element of this Agreement."

Ivory Coast

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the situation in Cote d'Ivoire. [177097]

Mr. Mullin: The situation in Cote d'Ivoire is worrying. The Linas-Marcoussis Peace Agreement (LMA) is in jeopardy following the sacking of three opposition Ministers by President Gbagbo, and the opposition's continued boycott of the Government.

The UK fully supports the LMA and has called on all parties in Cote d'Ivoire to ensure its implementation. The UK is working with the Security Council, UN, EU and Economic Community of West African States to keep the LMA alive and to bring renewed stability to Cote d'Ivoire.

Kuwait

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what response the Kuwait authorities have made to representations to curtail Iraqi reparation payments to their country; what his response to the Kuwaiti position is; and if he will make a statement. [177439]

Mr. Rammell: We are conscious of the importance to Kuwait of its entitlement to compensation approved by the United Nations Compensation Commission (UNCC) for the huge losses occasioned by the Iraqi occupation. Under UN Security Council Resolution 1483, Iraqi payments to the UNCC Compensation Fund can be changed only by a decision of a sovereign Iraqi government and of the UNCC Governing Council.

Ministerial Travel

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many journeys were made by helicopter by each Minister in his Department in each of the last 10 years; and what the journey length was in each case. [175745]

Mr. Straw: There is no central record of non-RAF helicopter journeys made by Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Ministers. However, since the Financial Year 1996–97, FCO Ministers have made the following RAF helicopter journeys in the UK. This list excludes those made overseas.

Minister	*Date*	*Locations*	*Total journey time*
1996–97			
Secretary of State	7 May 1996	Northolt, Birmingham, Battersea	1 hour 40 minutes
Secretary of State	1 August 1996	Northolt, Battersea	15 minutes
Minister of State, (Eastern Europe)	18 February 1997	Northolt, Battersea	10 minutes
1997–98			
Secretary of State	21 July 1997	Northolt, Highgrove, Battersea	1 hour 20 minutes
2002–03			
Secretary of State	6 September 2002	Northolt, Birmingham, Northolt	1 hour 35 minutes

No RAF helicopter journeys were made in the Financial Years 1998–99, 1999–2000, 2000–01, 2001–02 and 2003–04.

Monaco

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his

Department has made of the practice in Monaco of holding prisoners on remand for extensive periods without charge in the context of the Monegasque Government's desire to join the Council of Europe. [177081]

Mr. MacShane: Monaco is committed to introduce new laws as part of the process of joining the Council of Europe. As well as undertaking to sign the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR) upon accession, and to ratify this Convention and Protocols 1, 4, 6, 7 and 13 within a year of accession, the Government of Monaco has also undertaken to submit the necessary Bills aimed at defining arrangements for: police custody; pre-trial detention; the provision of grounds for negative administrative decisions; and the expulsion of foreigners and suppression of forced exile. These measures will help ensure the compatibility of Monaco legislation with the ECHR and its Protocols.

Once Monaco joins the Council of Europe we will work within the Council of Europe to monitor Monaco's honouring of their accession commitments and obligations, including this requirement to introduce domestic legislation to ensure conformity with the standards of the Council of Europe.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the fairness of the judicial process in Monaco in the context of the Monegasque Government's desire to join the Council of Europe. [177082]

Mr. MacShane: The Government welcomes Monaco's application for membership of the Council of Europe, providing Monaco honours the commitments set out by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. These include Monaco signing upon accession to the Council of Europe the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

North Korea

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what information has been received *(a)* by his Department and *(b)* by the United Kingdom mission to the United Nations in respect of the nuclear programmes in North Korea, following the visit of the UN Special Envoy, Maurice Strong, to Pyongyang on 22 May. [177069]

Mr. MacShane: Mr. Strong gave a briefing to diplomats based in Pyongyang before his return to New York. The briefing was general in nature, and did not go into detail about the discussions that he had with his North Korean interlocutors. Our Embassy in Pyongyang passed details about the briefing to the relevant departments in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. To date, Mr. Strong has not passed any information to the Mission to the United Nations.

Private Security Contractors

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many private security contractors are employed by the UK to protect its interests, individuals and agencies in *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* other countries abroad; in what roles they are employed; under which budget heads, including those of other Departments, the costs fall; what the current annual cost is on those budget heads where the main costs fall; and if he will make a statement. [177077]

Mr. Rammell: On Iraq, I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave my hon. Friend the Member for Liverpool, Walton (Mr. Kilfoyle) on 25 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1573W.

Many of our overseas missions employ private security contractors but the detailed information requested on the numbers involved is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate costs. The majority of these contracts provide personnel to work as static guards at our missions and at staff accommodation in countries where the security situation warrants that level of protection. In some of our high-risk posts we use contract guards to provide a quick reaction force and to act as individual bodyguards. The costs of these contract guards fall under administration and programme budgets, which are devolved to regional and functional directorates within the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The directorates then disburse funds to posts. Not including Iraq, approximately £6 million was allocated to fund contract guarding in the financial year 2003–04.

Stephen Troth

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations his Department has made to the French Government regarding discrimination against Stephen Troth on the grounds of nationality. [177083]

Mr. Mullin: We are not aware that Stephen Troth has made any allegations of discrimination on the grounds of nationality and we have made no representations to the French Government on this matter.

Since Mr. Troth's arrest in Monaco in 2001, our consular staff in London and Marseille have followed his case closely. Our primary role has always been to ensure Mr. Troth's welfare. Our Consul-General in Marseille and Honorary Consul in Monaco visited Mr. Troth several times and our consular staff have provided Mr. Troth and his family assistance wherever they properly could and have recommended that Mr. Troth and his family continue to be guided by their lawyer on legal matters.

Sudan

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on incursions by the Janjaweed militia into countries neighbouring Sudan; and what assessment he has made of the Sudanese Government's responsibility for them. [177038]

Mr. Mullin: We are concerned by reports of incursions by the Janjaweed militias into Chad. We are in regular contact with the Sudanese Government about the situation in Darfur. During the visit of the Sudanese Foreign Minister to London on 11 May, my right hon. Friends, the Foreign Secretary and the Secretary of State for International Development, and I made strong representations to the Foreign Minister about Darfur and in particular the need for the Sudanese Government

to act now to rein in the Janjaweed. Whatever the Government's relation to these militias, the Sudanese Government have a responsibility to protect their civilians.

Our Embassy in Khartoum has discussed the conflict in Darfur with the Government of Chad. We have welcomed the role played by the Government of Chad in mediating at the ceasefire talks between the parties to the conflict, and their continued support to the 130,000 Sudanese refugees whom they are currently hosting.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the peace settlement in the Sudan signed at Naivasha; what help the Government intend to offer in relation to maintaining the peace, with particular reference to Abeyei, the Nuba Mountains and the Southern Blue Nile and Darfur; and what assessment he has made of the implications of the peace settlement for the possible implementation of Sharia law in the south of the country. [177443]

Mr. Mullin: We welcomed the signing on 26 May of the latest protocols at the Sudan peace talks at Naivasha. These protocols cover power-sharing, the two areas (Nuba Mountains and Southern Blue Nile) and Abyei, and, together with the previously agreed documents, provide the political framework for a comprehensive peace agreement. We are calling on all parties to continue to work towards the signing of a comprehensive peace agreement can be signed soon. In the expectation of a peace agreement the UK has allocated £35million to Sudan for 2004–05. In addition, we have also allocated £3.5 million from the Africa Conflict Prevention Pool.

In respect of nationally enacted legislation, Sharia law will only apply in the states outside Southern Sudan, as stated in the Machakos Protocol of 20 July 2002.

Despite the progress at the Peace Talks in Naivasha, we remain deeply concerned about the situation in Darfur. We have already committed over £18.2 million in response to the crisis there, and my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development, is currently visiting the region.

Uzbekistan

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Uzbekistan concerning discrimination faced by Protestant Christians in that country, with particular reference to *(a)* threats made against members of the Church of Christ by the public prosecutor's office in Nukus in April, *(b)* the closure by the authorities of the Urgench Baptist Church in Khorezm region in February, *(c)* attempts to force Murat Abatov to renounce his faith at a state-run farm in the Karakalpakstan region in April and *(d)* pressure being exerted upon Protestant Christians in Nukus, by the secret police and the regular police, to sign statements admitting they are members of a religious sect. [177455]

Mr. Rammell: We remain concerned by reports of religious intolerance and persecution in Uzbekistan and our Embassy in Tashkent maintains close contact with representatives of religious groups and NGOs. My hon. Friend the Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mike O'Brien) discussed the importance of an open, democratic society where freedom of expression was encouraged with the Uzbek Deputy Prime Minister on 4 February. An EU demarche made to the Uzbek Foreign Minister in April raised the cancellation of a Human Rights Watch Conference on Religious Persecution by the Uzbek Ministry of Justice. We strongly believe that permitting free expression of religious belief is the best means of combating the attractiveness of some of the more radical and extremist ideologies. While we have not made any representations on these individual cases, we have seen reports of discrimination faced by Protestant Christians, as well as other religious minorities, in Uzbekistan and shall continue to raise cases of religious persecution with the Uzbek authorities.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Asylum Seekers

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many failed asylum seekers families are awaiting removal in *(a)* Greater London and *(b)* the UK; and for how long each such family has been awaiting removal. [173875]

Mr. Browne: Information on the number of unsuccessful asylum seekers awaiting removal—or the length of time for which they have been awaiting removal—is not available, partly because some applicants may leave the United Kingdom without informing the Immigration Service.

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which countries *(a)* are reluctant and *(b)* refuse to accept the return of failed asylum seekers from the UK. [176289]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* When we return failed asylum seekers we do not distinguish them from any other individual with no right to remain in the UK and we do not inform the receiving country that they have claimed asylum.

The vast majority of countries accept the principle of the return of their own nationals from the UK, once nationality has been established. The Chicago Convention obliges signatory nations to accept back those of their own nationals who do not qualify to remain in other States. 188 countries worldwide are signatories (see following list.).

Despite their obligations under the Chicago Convention, Iran for example is reluctant to accept the enforced return of their nationals. We are currently in discussions with the Iranian government to agree an arrangement which will allow us to enforce returns to Iran.

Contracting States to the Chicago convention

Afghanistan
Albania
Algeria
Andorra
Angola
Antigua and Barbuda

Argentina
Armenia
Australia
Austria
Azerbaijan
Bahamas
Bahrain
Bangladesh
Barbados
Belarus
Belgium
Belize
Benin
Bhutan
Bolivia
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Botswana
Brazil
Brunei Darussalam
Bulgaria
Burkina Faso
Burundi
Cambodia
Cameroon
Canada
Cape Verde
Central African Republic
Chad
Chile
China
Colombia
Comoros
Congo
Cook Islands
Costa Rica
Cote d'Ivoire
Croatia
Cuba
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Denmark
Djibouti
Dominican Republic
Ecuador
Egypt
El Salvador
Equatorial Guinea
Eritrea
Estonia
Tthiopi
Fiji
Finland
France
Gabon
Gambia
Georgia
Germany
Ghana
Greece
Grenada
Guatemala
Guinea
Guinea-Bissau
Guyana
Haiti
Honduras
Hungary
Iceland
India
Indonesia
Iran
Iraq
Ireland
Israel
Italy
Jamaica
Japan
Jordan
Kazakhstan
Kenya
Kiribati
Kuwait
Kyrgyzstan
Lao, People's Democratic Republic
Latvia
Lebanon
Lesotho
Liberia
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Madagascar
Malawi
Malaysia
Maldives
Mali
Malta
Marshall Islands
Mauritania
Mauritius
Mexico
Micronesia (Federated States of)
Monaco
Mongolia
Morocco
Mozambique
Myanmar
Namibia
Nauru
Nepal
Netherlands
New Zealand
Nicaragua
Niger

Nigeria
Norway
Oman
Pakistan
Palau
Panama
Papua New Guinea
Paraguay
Peru
Philippines
Poland
Portugal
Qatar
Republic of Korea
Republic of Moldova
Romania
Russian Federation
Rwanda
Saint Lucia
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Samoa
San Marino
Sao Tome and Principe
Saudi Arabia
Senegal
Serbia and Montenegro
Seychelles
Sierra Leone
Singapore
Slovakia
Slovenia
Solomon Islands
Somalia
South Africa
Spain
Sri Lanka
Sudan
Suriname
Swaziland
Sweden
Switzerland
Syrian Arab Republic
Tajikistan
Thailand
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Togo
Tonga
Trinidad and Tobago
Tunisia
Turkey
Turkmenistan
Uganda
Ukraine
United Arab Emirates
United Kingdom
United Republic of Tanzania
United States of America
Uruguay
Uzbekistan
Vanuatu
Venezuela
Vietnam
Yemen
Zambia
Zimbabwe

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether China is prepared to receive back failed asylum seekers from the UK. [176290]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* China is prepared to accept back failed asylum seekers from the UK in principle. However, the Chinese have very strict conditions for re-documenting their nationals to enable repatriation. This issue is at the forefront of our bilateral relations with the Chinese and the my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister underlined the importance of finding a solution to the problem of undocumented returns during his discussions with the Chinese Premier earlier this month. We have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Chinese on co-operation on illegal immigration, which will provide a framework to take forward our discussions with the Chinese to improve the system of returning failed asylum seekers as a matter of urgency.

Child Pornography

Ms Shipley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research his Department is funding into the use of *(a)* peer to peer file-sharing technology, *(b)* Freenet and *(c)* other new technologies for the dissemination of child pornography. [173904]

Paul Goggins: The role of peer to peer file-sharing technology and related technology, such as 3G mobile phones, has been identified as a means of disseminating illegal content, including child pornography. This was confirmed in Home Office research which sought to examine current and potential future abuses of otherwise legitimate technology, and is consistent with the findings of similar studies which have been carried out by others in this field.

Regardless of the method used to distribute these images, it is our intention to ensure that law enforcement have the capability to effectively identify and investigate individuals who are producing, distributing, and using them.

Government continue to work in partnership with industry and law enforcement agencies to assess the new technology which is emerging and the potential it offers for the distribution of child abuse images and other illegal material. Our aim is to ensure that the technology does not present law enforcement with any barriers to fulfil their investigative role.

As part of a wide range of on-going work of the Police Science and Technology Strategy Group (future scanning subgroup) seeks to ensure that the police service can exploit new technology at the earliest opportunity and is prepared for new technology based threats.

Child Sex Tourism

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his Department's plans are to tackle child sex tourism. [172797]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* The Government are committed to eradicating the sexual exploitation of children, including where British citizens go abroad to abuse children. We have put in place comprehensive legislation to deal with this problem:

Section 72 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 enables courts in England and Wales and Northern Ireland to deal with British citizens or residents who commit sexual offences against children abroad. Similar provisions apply in Scotland.

The Criminal Justice (Terrorism and Conspiracy) Act 1998 makes it an offence for a person to conspire to commit an offence outside the UK, including sexual offences against children.

In addition, the Sexual Offences Act 2003 has introduced a new civil preventive order aimed at protecting children abroad from UK sex offenders. The foreign travel order is targeted specifically against paedophile sex tourists—those who travel overseas to abuse young children because the opportunities to do so are more available in some countries than in the UK. It enables the courts to prevent those with a conviction for a sexual offence against a child aged under 16 from travelling abroad where there is evidence that they may cause serious sexual harm to children aged under 16 overseas.

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 also includes a new order which enables the courts to make offenders who have received convictions or cautions for sexual offences overseas (whether they are British citizens or foreign nationals) subject to the notification requirements ("the sex offenders register") of Part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 if they come to the UK.

The Government have also made regulations which reduce the period that "registered" sex offenders can intend to spend abroad before they have to notify the police form eight days to three days. The police can, and do, pass this information to other jurisdictions where they believe it will prevent the offender from committing an offence overseas.

Finally, a working group has been established to further examine the issue of combating child sex tourism. This group includes representatives for Government Departments, the travel industry, NGOs and the police. The Home Office is also funding a research project, managed by ECPAT UK, aimed at identifying the best channels through which we can raise awareness of child sex tourism.

Correspondence

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he intends to reply to the letter from the right honourable Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 30 March with regard to Mrs. Ahmed and Farooq Ahmed. [172253]

Mr. Blunkett: I wrote to my right hon. Friend on 8 June 2004.

Credit Card Purchases

Judy Mallaber: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been convicted in courts in England and Wales of *(a)* purchasing child pornography images and *(b)* other offences involving the use of a credit card on line in each of the last five years. [173055]

Paul Goggins: Such offences cannot be separately identified in the statistics of court proceedings collected centrally.

Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what role *(a)* further education and *(b)* higher education colleges have played in improving professional standards in crime and disorder reduction partnerships; and if he will provide examples of best practice. [174968]

Ms Blears: Further and higher education colleges offer a variety of courses in community safety for Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs). These include short course programmes on single topics, vocational qualifications, and degrees up to masters level. Some colleges have also assisted CDRPs with the development of their crime and disorder audits and strategies and analysis of specific local crime problems.

There are no established examples of best practice. Individual colleges evaluate their own courses and they are also inspected by Ofsted, but no comprehensive assessment of their effectiveness in improving professional standards has been undertaken.

The Home Office publishes details of courses available from a range of further and higher education colleges on the Crime Reduction Website.

Crime Prevention/Detection

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many hours were worked by police officers in the latest year for which figures are available in each police force in England and Wales; [173567]

(2) how many police officer hours were spent by each police force in England and Wales in combating and solving each category of crimes. [173566]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* The information requested is not available centrally.

The latest published figures on police strength for September 2003, were given in online report 13/04, "Police strength in England and Wales 30 September 2004".

Detainees

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received concerning the workings of the escort system for detainees about to be removed from the UK; and if he will make a statement. [173546]

Mr. Browne: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary has not received any representations concerning the workings of the escort system for detainees.

Detention Centres

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what figures he has collated on the use of force at *(a)* Yarl's Wood detention centre and *(b)* other detention and removal centres; and if he will make a statement. [173544]

Mr. Browne: During the period from the re-opening of Yarl's Wood in September 2003 to 17 May 2004 the total number of incidents where the use of force has been necessary are listed in the table.

Those figures in brackets represent the number of detainees involved in these incidents.

	Number of incidents	*Number of detainees involved*
Campsfield House	16	(16)
Dover	28	(24)
Dungavel House	24	(23)
Harmondsworth	61	(56)
Haslar	15	(14)
Lindholme	9	(9)
Oakington	9	(8)
Tinsley House	13	(13)
Yarl's Wood	20	(14)

Figures are closely monitored in order to identify and investigate any trends in the use of force.

DNA Evidence

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have had their sentences quashed as a result of DNA evidence. [169238]

Paul Goggins: DNA technology can be used both to help the police identify criminals and to eliminate suspects. Convictions may be secured with the assistance of DNA evidence but it may also be a factor in leading to the quashing of a particular conviction and sentence. However, the information on the numbers of such appeal cases is not available centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Durham Jail

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women have been held at Durham jail in each month since 1 May 2003. [176661]

Paul Goggins: The population of Her Majesty Prison Durham, by gender, in each month since May 2003 is given in the table.

Population of HMP Durham—month end figures

	Males	*Females*
2003		
May	603	102
June	605	107
July	603	105
August	609	104
September	601	104
October	608	100
November	597	100
December	601	97
2004		
January	595	106
February	603	100
March	619	106
April	625	103

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners have been released on early release from Durham jail since 1 May 2003. [176665]

Paul Goggins: Between 1 May 2003 and 30 April 2004 there were 118 prisoners released from Her Majesty Prison Durham on the Home Detention Curfew Scheme.

Entry Clearance (Istanbul)

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to visit the entry clearance operation in Istanbul. [169888]

Mr. Browne: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary has no plans to visit the entry clearance operation in Istanbul.

EU Accession Countries

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of people from EU accession countries living and working in the UK; and how many of those he estimates are working illegally. [161816]

Mr. Browne: During the period September to November 2003, an estimated 113,000 nationals of the 10 EU accession countries were resident in the United Kingdom. Of these, 51,000 were in employment, 48,000 were economically inactive, 10,000 were aged under 16 and less than 10,000 were ILO unemployed.

Official estimates of the size of the illegally working migrant population in the United Kingdom do not exist. The Government have commissioned research into the methods used in other countries to estimate the size of their illegal populations (illegal workers forming part of this population) in order to define methods appropriate for the UK. Further research is also planned to investigate illegal working in order to help the Government tackle the problem more effectively.

The work required is challenging because, by definition, illegal migrants fall outside of official statistics and are therefore difficult to measure. People illegally present in the UK are also motivated to ensure they remain hidden, which is a challenge to conducting research.

EU Enlargement

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what provision his Department made prior to 1 May to ensure that those to whom his Department had written indicating the termination of support and housing benefits had in their possession the documents necessary to enable them *(a)* to seek work in the UK and *(b)* to return to their EU member state of origin. [172927]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* On 1 May 2004, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Cyprus and Malta became members of the European Union and asylum seekers from these countries ceased to be eligible for support from the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) or a local authority under the Asylum Support (Interim Provisions) Regulations 1999. Immigration Nationality Directorate officials wrote to all those affected to ensure that they were aware of their options after 1 May. Letters were sent on 5 and 6 April to those supported directly by NASS and on 16 April to those supported by local authorities. The letters explained the options available, namely to obtain work and register under the Worker Registration Scheme (except for those from Cyprus and Malta who are not required to register), to remain in the UK but become self supporting, or to return to their country of origin.

The letters advised those affected that they could look for work immediately but that they could not take up that work until 1 May unless they already had been given permission to work by the Home Office. The letters also advised those affected that they could approach their embassy or consulate for advice on returning.

Accession state nationals who wish to make an application for a workers registration card whose passports are being held by the Home Office should indicate this on the workers registration form. Their documentation will then be considered alongside the application.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people from EU accession countries arrived at UK international *(a)* airports and *(b)* bus stations in the first week of May last year. [173183]

Mr. Browne: Data are not available for the period requested.

Data from the International Passenger Survey (IPS) shows that a total of 86,000 visits were made by nationals of EU accession countries in May 2003.

Identity Card

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether an identity card card reader will be available for purchase by the general public under proposals in the draft Identity Cards Bill and consultation document (Cm 6178). [173128]

Mr. Browne: There are a number of potential options for card readers, ranging from biometric readers which might be used to verify identity securely, to card readers on personal computers which might be able to verify the authenticity of the card. At present no firm decisions have been made on card reader specification. The Identity Cards Programme is investigating these options and evaluating them, looking particularly at how they might be used by potential user organisations and the privacy and security issues which arise from these options.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the *(a)* availability and *(b)* reliability of technology designed to identify duplicate identities based on identical biometric information. [173131]

Mr. Browne: Where an individual attempts to enrol twice into the identity cards scheme using separate identities, it is essential that the second enrolment is detected by making a successful match against the biometric already enrolled by that individual. This form of negative matching is a common feature of existing biometric systems, including the police National Automated Fingerprint Identification Service (NAFIS) system and the on-going United Kingdom Passport Service (UKPS) biometric trial.

The identity cards programme is at an early stage in investigating the details of the requirement for matching within a large database, the design of feasibility work to test it and the technical solutions to deliver it.

Illegal Entrants

Sir John Stanley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many clandestine entrants into the United Kingdom have been detected and served with illegal entry papers *(a)* on entry and *(b)* in country in each month since December 2001. [176336]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* I refer the right hon. Member to the reply I gave him on 17 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 761W.

Immigration

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what the average time spent by immigrants in *(a)* Metropolitan Police Authority and *(b)* British Transport Police cells is in (i) Camden and (ii) Greater London; [173872]

(2) how many immigrants are being detained in *(a)* Metropolitan Police Authority and *(b)* British Transport Police facilities in (i) Camden and (ii) Greater London. [173874]

Mr. Browne: Information on persons detained in police cells is not held centrally and could be obtained only by examining individual case files at disproportionate cost.

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what changes have been made to the employment of UK immigration officers in Cherbourg during 2004; [170603]

(2) what changes have been made to weekend operations involving immigration controls in Dorset during 2004. [170601]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 5 May 2004]:* The UK Immigration Service does not presently operate in Cherbourg.

On 19 July 2002 a pilot scheme started between Cherbourg and Poole. UK Immigration Officers provided advice and support to the carrier in respect of travel status of passengers prior to boarding in

Cherbourg. The officer then returned with the inbound ferry to control passengers seeking leave to enter the United Kingdom during the crossing.

On 22 February 2004 the scheme was suspended. Local managers are seeking to resume the pilot exercise at the earliest opportunity.

Iraq Refugees

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has *(a)* to institute a voluntary assisted return programme for refugees from Iraq and *(b)* to begin forcibly returning individuals to Iraq who have been refused refugee status and other forms of protection in the UK. [173215]

Mr. Browne: Since July last year the Home Office has been facilitating, without incident, the return of small numbers of Iraqi citizens who want to return home through the International Organisation for Migration. Individuals returning under this programme receive independent advice and practical assistance with travel arrangements.

We have also reached agreement with the Coalition Provisional Authority to begin enforced returns to Iraq. We are working to finalise the practicalities of the enforced returns programme, which we will implement as soon as the necessary arrangements are in place.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the status is of Iraqi individuals who were refused refugee status and other forms of protection in the UK in 2003. [173216]

Mr. Browne: The current status of Iraqi asylum seekers, who were refused refugee status and other forms of protection in the UK in 2003, will depend on whether they have appealed against this decision, and if so what the outcome of the appeal was. If all appeal rights have been exhausted and no leave of any kind has been granted, these individuals will have no basis on which to remain in the United Kingdom and will be expected to return to Iraq.

We are currently facilitating the return of those who wish to go home through the International Organisation for Migration. We have also reached an agreement with the Coalition Provisional Authority to begin enforced returns to Iraq, and will commence these as soon as the necessary arrangements are in place.

Life Prisoners

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners are serving a life sentence; how many of these have served *(a)* less than 10 years, *(b)* between 10 and 15 years, *(c)* between 15 and 20 years, *(d)* between 20 and 25 years, *(e)* between 25 and 30 years and *(f)* longer than 30 years. [173103]

Paul Goggins: The number of life sentence prisoners at the end of March 2004 was 5,553 and the table shows the life sentence population at the end of June 2002 by the length of time served.

Population of life prisoners by interval since date of initial reception on life sentence—England and Wales, 30 June 2002

	Number of persons
All	5,147
Less than five years	1,928
Five to less than 10 years	1,389
10 to less than 15 years	819
15 to less than 20 years	515
20 to less than 25 years	299
25 to less than 30 years	110
30 years and over	86

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list prisons which accommodate life sentence inmates; what the capacity of each prison is; and how many and what percentage of prisoners are serving life sentences. [173104]

Paul Goggins: A list of prisons in England and Wales that held life sentence prisoners on 31 March 2004, together with the requested information, is given in the table.

Prisons holding life sentence prisoners, 31 March 2004

	Operational capacity	*Lifer population*	*Total population*	*Percentage of population serving life sentences*
Acklington	881	25	869	2.9
Albany	526	111	521	21.3
Altcourse	1,010	7	988	0.7
Ashwell	545	52	533	9.8
Askham Grange	151	10	134	7.5
Aylesbury	361	46	363	12.7
Bedford	464	7	481	1.5
Belmarsh	921	47	921	5.1
Birmingham	1,400	15	1,406	1.1
Blakenhurst	880	4	870	0.5
Blantyre House	122	27	117	23.1
Blundeston	464	29	462	6.3
Bristol	584	65	581	11.2
Brixton	798	9	818	1.1
Buckley Hall	330	8	322	2.5
Bullingdon	963	6	943	0.6
Bullwood Hall	184	37	152	24.3
Cardiff	669	65	675	9.6
Castington	346	8	336	2.4
Channings Wood	667	51	664	7.7
Chelmsford	575	9	593	1.5
Coldingley	390	37	387	9.6
Cookham Wood	140	15	137	10.9
Dartmoor	625	18	618	2.9
Doncaster	1,120	12	1,118	1.1

Prisons holding life sentence prisoners, 31 March 2004

	Operational capacity	*Lifer population*	*Total population*	*Percentage of population serving life sentences*
Dorchester	260	3	223	1.3
Dovegate	860	129	839	15.4
Drake Hall	315	5	297	1.7
Durham	746	56	725	7.7
East Sutton Park	100	3	97	3.1
Eastwood Park	346	1	334	0.3
Edmunds Hill	310	1	299	0.3
Elmley	985	17	973	1.7
Erlestoke	426	27	421	6.4
Exeter	529	5	516	1.0
Featherstone	615	17	611	2.8
Feltham	761	6	688	0.9
Ford	541	47	527	8.9
Forest Bank	1,040	3	994	0.3
Foston Hall	235	30	227	13.2
Frankland	653	275	662	41.5
Full Sutton	608	261	599	43.6
Garth	667	75	659	11.4
Gartree	404	405	406	99.8
Glen Parva	808	1	778	0.1
Gloucester	324	3	302	1.0
Grendon/Spring Hill	567	134	557	24.1
Haverigg	564	16	563	2.8
Hewell Grange	170	5	165	3.0
Highdown	753	5	732	0.7
Highpoint	816	39	807	4.8
Hollesley Bay	330	34	303	11.2
Holloway	495	5	460	1.1
Holme House	994	8	996	0.8
Hull	1,071	11	1,086	1.0
Kingston(Portsmouth)	140	134	136	98.5
Kirkham	590	31	542	5.7
Kirklevington	223	14	217	6.5
Lancaster	232	3	235	1.3
Lancaster Farms	532	2	519	0.4
Latchmere House	196	14	197	7.1
Leeds	1,254	15	1,243	1.2
Leicester	385	5	374	1.3
Lewes	526	8	513	1.6
Leyhill	512	124	498	24.9
Lincoln	481	10	461	2.2
Lindholme	687	53	663	8.0
Littlehey	706	54	698	7.7
Liverpool	1,476	114	1,449	7.9
Long Lartin	442	194	436	44.5
Low Newton	396	1	320	0.3
Maidstone	547	23	548	4.2
Manchester	1,269	126	1,252	10.1
Moorland	1,039	42	1,005	4.2
New Hall	426	4	376	1.1
North Sea Camp	307	43	303	14.2
Norwich	760	10	726	1.4
Nottingham	550	15	509	2.9
Parc	1,028	15	1,016	1.5
Parkhurst	507	52	496	10.5
Pentonville	1,205	8	1,199	0.7
Preston	664	14	675	2.1
Ranby	858	19	858	2.2
Risley	1,073	47	1,060	4.4
Rye Hill	664	117	280	41.8
Send	220	3	209	1.4
Shepton Mallet	189	186	187	99.5
Shrewsbury	350	1	350	0.3
Standford Hill	464	16	423	3.8
Stocken	622	47	621	7.6
Styal	457	18	442	4.1
Sudbury	559	87	556	15.6
Swaleside	777	345	774	44.6
Swansea	348	1	347	0.3
Swinfen Hall	310	34	310	11.0
The Mount	760	26	757	3.4
The Verne	587	32	579	5.5
The Wolds	360	31	358	8.7
Usk/Prescoed	420	39	413	9.4
Wakefield	565	405	562	72.1
Wandsworth	1,441	16	1,432	1.1
Warren Hill	222	6	218	2.8
Wayland	706	40	699	5.7
Wealstun	624	18	568	3.2
Wellingborough	526	27	523	5.2
Whatton	360	9	358	2.5

Prisons holding life sentence prisoners, 31 March 2004

	Operational capacity	Lifer population	Total population	Percentage of population serving life sentences
Whitemoor	438	208	423	49.2
Winchester	655	16	591	2.7
Woodhill	789	18	792	2.3
Wormwood Scrubs	1,239	228	1,244	18.3
Wymott	866	38	849	4.5

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many current life sentence prisoners are detained beyond the expiry of their tariff for *(a)* less than five years, *(b)* between five and 10 years, *(c)* between 10 and 15 years and *(d)* more than 15 years. [173105]

Paul Goggins: This information is not held centrally and could be collected only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many and what percentage of life sentence prisoners detained more than five years beyond the expiry of their tariff refuse to comply with penal and parole regimes that require the prisoner to admit their guilt or confront offending behaviour. [173106]

Paul Goggins: The information is not held centrally and could be collected only at disproportionate cost.

Motoring Offences

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which motoring offences are included within the scope of his Department's statistics on offences that are brought to justice. [172405]

Paul Goggins: The table gives information relating to the motoring offences included within Home Office statistics on offences that are brought to justice.

The offences brought to justice target counts notifiable (recorded) crimes that resulted in a positive outcome during the period, that is where the offender was brought to justice by being issued with a penalty notice for disorder (PND), cautioned, convicted or the offences being taken into consideration (TIC).

Notifiable offences are those offences that must be notified by police forces to the Home Office and are published as recorded crime as part of the National Crime Statistics.

The offence code 825/90 (miscellaneous motoring offences), which was included in the 2003–04 targets for each criminal justice system area, will be excluded from the 2004–05 offences brought to justice targets as most of the offences it covers are not notifiable. However, the notifiable element of 825/90 "Tampering with Motor Vehicles" will be retained by giving it a new offence code from April 2004 onwards.

Motoring offences included with Home Office offences brought to justice statistics

Classification code	Brief description of offence	Legislation
Indictable offences		
004/04	Causing death by dangerous driving	Road Traffic Act 1988 S.1 as amended by the Road Traffic Act 1991 S.1 and CJA 1993 S.67
004/06	Death by careless driving when under the influence of drink or drugs	Road Traffic Act 1988 S.3A as added by Road Traffic Act 1991 S.3 and amended by Criminal Justice Act 1993 S.6
008/04	Causing bodily harm by furious driving	Offence Against the Person Act 1861 S.35
Triable-Either-Way Offences		
005/11	Causing danger by causing anything to be on road, interfering with vehicles or traffic equipment	Road Traffic Act 1988 S. 22A as added by Road Traffic Act 1991 S.6
037/01	Where, owing the driving of the vehicle, an accident occurs causing the death of any person	Theft Act 1968 S.12A as added by the Aggravated Vehicle Taking Act 1992 S.1
037/02	Where the vehicle was being driven dangerously, where injury to any person or damage to any property was caused, or damage was caused to the vehicle	Theft Act 1968 S.12A as added by the Aggravated Vehicle Taking Act 1992 S.1
048/01	Stealing motor vehicles	Theft Act 1968 S.1
802/00	Aiding, abetting, causing or permitting reckless driving	Road Traffic Act 1988 S.2 as amended by Road Traffic Act 1991 S.2
814/01	Fraud, forgery etc. associated with driving licence	Road Traffic Act 1988 S.173(1) Public Passenger Vehicle Act 1981 S.65 (1) *(a)* and (2)
814/02	Fraud, forgery etc. associated with insurance certificate	Road Traffic Act 1988 SS.173 (1) and 175 *(a)*
814/03	Fraud, forgery etc. associated with registration and licensing documents	Vehicle Excise and Registration Act 1994 SS.44 and 45; Public Passenger Vehicles Act 1981 S.65 (1) *(b)* and (2)
814/04	Fraud, forgery etc. associated with work records	Transport Act 1968 S.99 (5)
814/05	Fraud, forgery etc. associated with operator's licence	Goods Vehicle (Licensing of Operators) Act 1995 S.38; Sch.5 Para 4; Road Traffic Act 1988 S.173 (1) Public Passenger Vehicles Act 1981 S.65 (1) *(a)* and (2)
814/06	Fraud, forgery etc. associated with test certificate	Road Traffic Act 1988 SS.173 (1) and 175 *(b)*
814/07	Mishandling or faking parking documents	Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 S.115 (1)

Motoring offences included with Home Office offences brought to justice statistics

Classification code	*Brief description of offence*	*Legislation*
Summary offences		
130/01	Unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle or being carried knowing vehicle to have been taken or driven	Theft Act 1968 S.12 (1) as amended by Criminal Justice Act 1988 S.37
131/01	Where the only factor is criminal damage of £5,000 or under	Theft Act 1968 S.168 S.12A as added by Aggravated Vehicle Taking Act 1992 S.2
825/90[1]	Tampering with motor vehicle and other miscellaneous non-notifiable offences	Road Traffic Act 1988 S. 25 plus other road traffic legislation

[1] The offences included within the offence code 825/90 will be excluded from offences brought to justice calculations from 2004–05 onwards with the exception of "tampering with a motor vehicle", which has been allocated it own code from April 2004 onwards.

Naturalisation Applications

Mr. Stunell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many naturalisation applications submitted prior to the reorganisation of the approval system carried out in summer 2003 remain to be processed; and if he will make a statement. [172998]

Mr. Browne: Information on the applications referred to is not available.

The latest published information on numbers of naturalisation applications granted can be found in the Home Office Statistical Bulletin, "Persons Granted British Citizenship, United Kingdom, 2003", published on 25 May 2004.

New Hall Prison

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners at New Hall women's prison were on suicide watch during each of the last three months. [172653]

Paul Goggins: "Suicide watch' is not a term used by the Prison Service. The level of observation for any individual prisoner identified to be at risk of suicide or self-harm can vary and is decided by a multi-disciplinary case review team, or by the unit manager when there has not been the opportunity for the case review to be held.

The inherent vulnerability of many women in custody, combined with the high levels of self-harm across women's prisons, results in a very large number of women prisoners presenting themselves as requiring special care, and being made subject to the "Self-Harm At Risk Form' F2052SH procedures. Staff caring for women prisoners face exceptional difficulties in distinguishing between those women who are intensely vulnerable and those who may be actively suicidal.

The number of new F2052SHs opened, and the number of prisoners on an open F2052SH at New Hall during each of the last three months is shown in the following table:

Month	*Number of new F2052SHs opened*[1]	*Number of women on an open F2052SH*[2]
February	48	97
March	54	92
April	64	100
Total	166	289

[1] These figures include women transferred into New Hall on open F2052SHs.

[2] These figures include newly opened F2052SHs and F2052SHs remaining open from the previous month.

The number of apparently self-inflicted deaths at New Hall in each of the past three years is shown in the following table.

Calendar year	*Number of self-inflicted deaths*
2001	0
2002	2
2003	3

In 2004 to date (11 May 2004), New Hall has experienced one apparently self-inflicted death.

The number of reported incidents of self-harm that occurred in each of the last three months at New Hall, and the number of women involved, is shown in the following table.

Month	*Number of reported incidents of self-harm*	*Number of prisoners involved*
February	131	28
March	94	28
April	39	20
Total	264	76

The number of self-inflicted deaths and level of self-harm among women prisoners is recognised as a very serious concern by the Prison Service and Ministers. The main principles of the outline suicide prevention strategy that I announced on 31 March 2004 apply across all types of prisons and to all prisoners, whether male or female. Women prisoners are to benefit from a specifically targeted and separate suicide prevention and self-harm management strategy being developed for them. This builds upon a number of interventions including: individual crisis counselling for women prisoners who self-harm; the continued development and evaluation of Dialectical Behaviour Therapy, which is currently being trialled at Durham, Bullwood Hall and Holloway prisons; investment and planning to ensure progress on the detoxification strategy in women's prisons; and the introduction of a new training pack for all staff working with women in custody, which includes a module on the health and well being of women prisoners. £1 million from the Department of Health has been allocated to women's prisons to be spent on the recruitment of psychiatric nurses.

New Hall itself has a comprehensive local suicide and self-harm prevention policy which is reviewed annually, and an active suicide and self-harm prevention team. A full-time Suicide Prevention Coordinator and recently appointed Safer Custody Manager are leading

improvements to the existing suicide prevention and other safer custody arrangements. It is intended that an open, less institutionalised environment will allow better interaction between staff and prisoners, and the provision of a dedicated interview room will facilitate more open discussion between prisoners and staff, which may, in turn, lead to easier identification of at-risk prisoners.

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what liaison took place between New Hall women's prison and the local area child protection committee about the welfare of girls under 18 in custody in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004. [172654]

Paul Goggins: During 2003 work began with Wakefield Social Services to develop child protection procedures for New Hall, these cover all child protection issues in the establishment including all individuals under the age of 18 and classified as juveniles, as well as mothers and babies.

Over the last nine months, the Governor of New Hall prison has, attended the area child protection committee (ACPC) meetings on a regular basis. The ACPC has now agreed the Child Protection procedures. There is also regular liaison with the initial response team about any concerns that the establishment has for any young person under 18, as well as any baby held within New Hall.

New Prisons

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many new prisons have been commissioned since May 1997. [172408]

Paul Goggins: Nine new prisons have been commissioned in England and Wales since May 1997; seven are operating (Altcourse, Ashfield, Dovegate, Forest Bank, Lowdham Grange, Pare and Rye Hill) and two are under construction, Bronzefield (to open in June 2004) and Peterborough (to open in March 2005).

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what new prisons are planned for England and Wales which will be opened within the next three years; where these prisons will be located; and if he will make a statement. [173290]

Paul Goggins: Two new private sector prisons providing 1,290 places are due to be opened within the next three years. Her Majesty's Prison Bronzefield at Ashford (near Heathrow), and Peterborough will open in June 2004 and March 2005 respectively.

Offender Management

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the performance testing programme for prisons will continue in its current form under the National Offender Management Service. [168397]

Paul Goggins: Market testing is only one mechanism for ensuring contestability, but it will remain an important one. As it will be some time before we can introduce full contestability through the regional offender managers' commissioning role it is likely that, in the short term, the majority of contracts with the public sector prisons will be agreed on a national basis. We expect the first market tests to begin in 2005–06. No decisions have yet been reached on how many prisons will be market tested in the first year, or how the competitions will be structured.

Policing/Crime Statistics (Preston)

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what powers preventing racial harassment have been introduced since 1997; and how many times these powers have been used in Preston. [169693]

Fiona Mactaggart: Prior to 1997 the Race Relations Act (RRA) 1976 already prohibited discrimination on racial grounds. The RRA did not specifically refer to harassment, but it was clear from case law that racial harassment was a type of detriment capable of amounting to the kind of less favourable treatment prohibited by the Act.

As part of its fulfilment of its obligations under the EC Race Directive the UK amended the Race Relations Act 1976 (by virtue of the Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003) so as to make it unlawful to harass a person, on grounds of race or ethnic or national origins, in the areas of activity covered by the 1976 Act.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 created new and separate offences where the offences of causing fear and violence or of causing harassment, alarm or distress under the Public Order Act 1986, or the offences of harassment or putting in fear of violence under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 were racially aggravated. Figures for the number of prosecutions in Preston for this type of offence are not centrally available. Lancashire police figures for harassment offences (published by the Home Office under the requirements of S95 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991) show a total of 717 recorded offences of this type in the Lancashire police area over the period 1999–2000 to 2001–02.

Prescoed Young Offenders Institute

Mr. Edwards: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received about the proposed transfer of prisoners convicted of sex offences to open conditions at Prescoed Young Offenders Institute; and if he will make a statement. [173621]

Paul Goggins: I have received a small number of representations from various organisations and individuals. I have endorsed the Prison Service's decision to allocate certain prisoners convicted of sexual offences, who are in their final stages in custody, to Her Majesty's Prison Prescoed. I have also undertaken to monitor progress closely.

Prisoners

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will take steps to ensure that no prisoner in England and Wales has to slop out at night. [172657]

Paul Goggins: All prisoners in normal location accommodation have access to sanitation by means of integral sanitation, electric unlocking, manual

unlocking or open access. Where integral sanitation is not in place, sanitation pots are provided for use in certain circumstances, for example when there are electronic system failures, or where staff operating manual night unlocking are called upon to respond to unforeseen incidents.

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects the prison population to reach 80,000. [168837]

Paul Goggins: The prison population cannot safely exceed the operational capacity of the Prison Service. On current plans the useable operational capacity of the Prison Service will be around 79,500 by the beginning of 2006. Prison Service funding for 2005–06 to 2007–08 will be considered as part of the current Spending Review.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women who are category A prisoners were being held in prison in England and Wales on 1 May. [173291]

Paul Goggins: On 1 May 2004, 951 males and seven females who were being held in prison in England and Wales, were classified as category A prisoners.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many prisoners have taken part in the *(a)* core, *(b)* extended, *(c)* adapted and *(d)* booster prisoner rehabilitation programmes; how much each programme costs per prisoner; and what impact each programme has had on levels of re-offending; [171249]

(2) how many prisoners have taken part in the *(a)* Enhanced Thinking Skills, *(b)* Reasoning and Rehabilitation, *(c)* Controlling Anger and Learning to Manage it, *(d)* Cognitive Self-Change Programme, *(e)* Cognitive Skills Booster Programme, *(f)* Healthy Relationships and *(g)* Prison Addressing Substance-Related Offending prisoner rehabilitation programmes; how much each programme costs per prisoner; and what impact each programme has had on levels of re-offending. [171252]

Paul Goggins: The following table gives information on the number of offending behaviour programmes that have been completed by prisoners in 2003–04. Costs vary between establishments depending on the level of security and staffing. An estimate of the average cost is provided.

Name of programme	*Number of programmes completed by prisoners*[1]	*Average cost per completion (£000)*[2]
Sex Offender Treatment Programme (SOTP) Core	496	7
SOTP Extended	103	7
SOTP Adapted	133	7
SOTP Booster	183	3.5
Enhanced Thinking Skills (ETS)	6,120	2.25
Reasoning and Rehabilitation (R&R)	1,090	3
Controlling Anger and Learning to Manage it (CALM)	335	3
Cognitive Self Change Programme (CSCP)	38	13.8
Cognitive Skills Booster Programme	160	2
Healthy Relationships Programme	28	7.8

[1] These are provisional figures. Final figures will not be available until the end of May 2004. These figures do not include prisoners who started but did not complete a programme. Prisoners may also have undertaken more than one programme.
[2] The costs exclude one-off costs and overheads, and will vary between establishments.

Information on Prison Addressing Substance-Related Offending is not yet available and I will write to the right hon. Member when it is. Details of the impact on the levels of re-offending for prisoners participating in ETS and R&R can be found in Home Office Research Findings Nos. 161, 206 and 226, and for SOTP core in No. 205. These can be found on the Home Office website. The levels of re-offending for prisoners participating in the other programmes are not yet available.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners have taken part in the *(a)* RAPt, *(b)* Prison 12 Step, *(c)* Substance Treatment Order, *(d)* Action on Drugs, *(e)* FOCUS, *(f)* Ley Prison Programme and *(g)* North West Therapeutic Community prisoner rehabilitation programmes; how much each programme cost per prisoner; and what impact each programme has had on levels of reoffending. [171250]

Paul Goggins: Information on offending behaviour programmes has been collected centrally only since 2001–02. Information for 2003–04 has not yet been fully collated. Information broken down by each intensive drug rehabilitation programme is currently being collated, and I will write to the right hon. Member when this is available. The following table shows the number of prisoners entering intensive drug programmes for the two years for which figures are available.

Intensive drug rehabilitation programme entrants

	Number
2001–02	4,691
2002–03	4,386

Costs vary between programmes and establishments; and some costs are contained in existing baselines. The average cost per prisoner per programme is around £1,500.

Due to the need to wait two years for reconviction results, only a limited research base on the effectiveness of prison-based drug rehabilitation programmes in reducing re-offending is so far available. Emerging research into the RAPt programme is, however, showing encouraging results, with 40 per cent. of graduates, rather than a predicted 51 per cent., re-offending within two years. Such results underline the importance of effective throughcare arrangements and timely aftercare services in the community.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many babies have been removed, voluntarily or compulsorily, from their mothers in prison in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004. [172352]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* This information is not available centrally. However, most separations are only temporary for the period of imprisonment and all decisions are made in the best interests of the child.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners have been held in police cells in each region of England and Wales under lock-out arrangements in the last 12 months; what the total cost of lock-outs was over this period; and what the average daily cost was. [172412]

Paul Goggins: The total number of lockouts in each escort contract area between 1 April 2003 and 31 March 2004 is given in the table.

Area		*Number of lockouts*
1	South Wales and West	51
2	South and South East	12
3	Metropolitan Police District	10
4	East Anglia	153
5	West Midlands and Mid-Wales	45
6	Merseyside and North Wales	73
7	East Midlands and Humberside	263
8	The North	184
Total		791

As police forces charge retrospectively, it is not yet possible to give a final cost for lockouts for 2003–04. However, the average cost per prisoner per night is calculated as £120, which means that the total cost for this period has been estimated at £94,920.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether prisoners serving sentences in England and Wales are permitted to pay national insurance contributions; and if he will make a statement. [172399]

Paul Goggins: Prisoners do not usually earn over the threshold for national insurance contributions. However, they are not exempt from payments. They may also make voluntary contributions whilst in prison.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many sentenced prisoners aged over 65 years were released from prisons in England and Wales in the last year for which figures are available. [172407]

Paul Goggins: The number of sentenced prisoners aged 65 years and over, who were released from prisons in England and Wales in 2003, was 341.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures are in place to deal with prisoners who complain of rape and sexual assault. [173133]

Paul Goggins: Prisoners who complain of rape or sexual assault are reporting an extremely serious assault. The prison would refer such a complaint to the police for investigation. The referral would either be through the local police liaison officer or directly to the local police.

The Prison Service would remain responsible for the aftercare of the prisoner and governors have available to them a range of specialist staff, including doctors and psychologists, to assist with this.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the *(a)* average and *(b)* medium wage earned by prisoners in England and Wales was in the last year; and if he will make a statement. [172406]

Paul Goggins: The purpose of paying convicted prisoners is to encourage and reward their constructive participation in the regime of the establishment.

While the Prison Service sets minimum rates of pay, each prison has devolved responsibility to enable them to set their own pay rates, details of which are not held centrally. The current average wage is approximately £8 per week.

Protection from Harassment Act

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many *(a)* police first stage warnings and *(b)* prosecutions have been made under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 in each of the last five years; [170013]

(2) how many people have *(a)* been imprisoned, *(b)* received a community sentence and *(c)* fined as a result of a breach of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997; [170014]

(3) how many prosecutions under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 have involved a *(a)* racial and *(b)* religious aggravation element. [170015]

Paul Goggins: The available information is contained in the table. Statistics on religiously aggravated offences were not collected centrally until 2003.

Statistics on court proceedings for 2003 will be published in the autumn of this year.

Number of defendants[1] proceeded against at the magistrates courts and found guilty and sentenced at all courts under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997

Statute	*Offence description*	*Year*	*Cautioned*	*Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*	*Sentenced*	*Absolute/ conditional discharge*
Protection from Harassment Act 1997 Sec 2	Offence of harassment	1997	171	507	249	248	99
		1998	693	4,304	2,221	2,224	763
		1999	1,147	5,427	27,09	2,700	973
		[2]2000	1,693	5,760	2,852	2,853	901
		2001	1,861	5,627	2,704	2,711	915
		2002	1,993	5,594	2,764	2,765	878
Protection from Harasument Act 1997 Sec 2 as amended by Crime & Disorder Act 1998, Sec 32(1) *(a)* (3)	Racially aggravated offence of harassment	1997	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
		1998	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
		1999	37	113	44	45	8
		[2]2000	48	217	81	81	12

Number of defendants[1] proceeded against at the magistrates courts and found guilty and sentenced at all courts under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997

Statute	Offence description	Year	Cautioned	Proceeded against	Found guilty	Sentenced	Absolute/ conditional discharge
		2001	76	246	102	102	10
		2002	35	248	99	102	10
Protection from Harassment Act 1997 Sec 3	Breach of conditions of an injunction against harassment	1997	1	7	3	3	—
		1998	8	23	14	14	1
		1999	5	30	13	15	—
		[2]2000	5	40	22	21	3
		2001	2	31	14	18	—
		2002	4	44	23	26	2
Protection from Harassment Act 1997 Sec 4	Putting people in fear of violence	1997	51	243	76	76	17
		1998	173	1,505	522	514	108
		1999	283	1,632	488	494	81
		[2]2000	403	1,585	515	520	104
		2001	577	1,502	535	539	83
		2002	655	1,470	585	582	61
Protection from Harassment Act 1997 Sec 4 as amended by Crime & Disorder Act 1998, Sec32 (1) *(b)* (4)	Racially aggravated putting people in fear of violence	1997	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
		1998	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
		1999	15	63	25	25	4
		[2]2000	15	118	59	60	7
		2001	7	149	55	55	8
		2002	7	130	53	52	6
Protection from Harassment Act 1997 Sec 5	Breach of restraining order	1997	—	23	16	14	2
		1998	10	357	274	273	35
		1999	3	669	461	471	60
		[2]2000	1	777	557	561	65
		2001	4	776	539	534	76
		2002	2	847	604	597	88

Statute	Offence description	Year	Fine	Community sentence	Fully suspended sentence	Immediate custody	Otherwise dealt with
Protection from Harassment Act 1997 Sec 2	Offence of harassment	1997	56	48	3	33	9
		1998	512	591	18	245	95
		1999	574	722	13	294	124
		[2]2000	620	860	29	305	138
		2001	559	815	12	284	126
		2002	517	923	10	288	149
Protection from Harassment Act 1997 Sec 2 as amended by Crime & Disorder Act 1998, Sec 32(1) *(a)* (3)	Racially aggravated offence of harassment	1997	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
		1998	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
		1999	3	14	—	16	4
		[2]2000	10	29	4	24	2
		2001	13	52	—	23	4
		2002	11	53	—	23	5
Protection from Harassment Act 1997 Sec 3	Breach of conditions of an injunction against harassment	1997	—	1	—	2	—
		1998	1	6	—	5	1
		1999	6	2	—	6	1
		[2]2000	7	3	2	6	—
		2001	8	6	1	3	—
		2002	8	8	4	3	1
Protection from Harassment Act 1997 Sec 4	Putting people in fear of violence	1997	16	24	1	16	2
		1998	66	194	6	121	19
		1999	80	194	8	116	15
		[2]2000	49	188	9	148	22
		2001	54	223	12	142	25
		2002	45	237	9	167	63

Statute	Offence description	Year	Fine	Community sentence	Fully suspended sentence	Immediate custody	Otherwise dealt with
Protection from Harassment Act 1997 Sec 4 as amended by Crime & Disorder Act 1998, Sec32 (1) *(b)* (4)	Racially aggravated putting people in fear of violence	1997	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
		1998	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
		1999	3	12	—	6	—
		[2]2000	2	26	—	22	3
		2001	3	26	—	16	2
		2002	6	23	2	15	—
Protection from Harassment Act 1997 Sec 5	Breach of restraining order	1997	1	1	—	10	—
		1998	53	57	3	123	2
		1999	89	94	12	206	10
		[2]2000	86	154	13	226	17
		2001	93	142	14	193	16
		2002	101	169	11	206	22

n/a = Not applicable.
[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.
[2] Staffordshire police were only able to submit sample data for persons dealt with at magistrates courts in 2000. Although sufficient to estimate higher orders of data, these data are not robust at a detailed level and have been excluded from this table.

Racial Harassment

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many times powers to prevent racial harassment have been used in Oldham, West and Royton. [170955]

Fiona Mactaggart: Figures for the number of prosecutions in Oldham, West and Royton for this type of offence are not centrally available. Greater Manchester police figures for harassment offences (published by the Home Office under the requirements of S95 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991) show a total of 2,075 recorded offences of this type in the Greater Manchester police area over the period 1999–2000 to 2001–02.

Reoffending

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how individual prisons will be held to account in order to reduce the reoffending of discharged prisoners. [167518]

Paul Goggins: Under the National Offender Management Service prison governors will continue to be accountable for the running of prisons. Over time regional offender managers will become responsible for ensuring the effective management of all offenders regardless of whether they have received a custodial or community sentence or a combination of the two. They will also commission services from prisons in the public and private sectors and specify standards to which each should perform. The regional offender managers will be line managed by the national offender manager who will report directly to the chief executive and will be responsible for reducing re-offending.

Reconviction Rate

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department by how much the reconviction rate has changed since the introduction of the private sector to the Prison Service. [168396]

Paul Goggins: The first private prison opened in 1992. Figures for the number and percentage of prisoners re-convicted within two years of discharge from prison are given in Prison Statistics, England and Wales, 2002. Table 9.1 shows reconviction rates for samples of discharged prisoners in each of the years 1987 to 1999. The related text explains that to compare reconviction rates over time it is necessary to control for changes in the characteristics of discharged prisoners, such as age and previous criminal history, which are strongly associated with reconviction rates.

Recordable Offences

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* acceptable behaviour certificates, *(b)* interim antisocial behaviour orders and *(c)* full antisocial behaviour orders have been issued in (i) Wales, (ii) the South Wales Police Authority region, (iii) the Bridgend Division of the South Wales police and (iv) the Ogmore constituency. [176579]

Ms Blears: Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs)—data on numbers of ABCs are not collected centrally.

Interim antisocial behaviour orders—available information shows that interim orders have been issued for two offenders within South Wales between introduction (2 December 2002) and 31 December 2003 (latest available).

Antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs)—introduced under the Crime and Disorder Act (1998) ASBOs have been available to the courts since 1 April 1999. Since commencement, and up to 31 December 2003, the number of ASBOs issued in Wales, as reported to the Home Office, is 77. Data on numbers of ASBOs issued within South Wales (in which the South Wales Police Authority and the Ogmore constituency are located), are given in the table, by local authority area.

Number of ASBOs, as notified to the Home Office by all courts within South Wales, by local authority area, 1 April 1999 to 31 December 2003

Local authority area	Total issued
South Wales	*36*
Of which:	
From 1 April 1999 to 31 May 2000 by pfa	0
From 1 June 2000 to 31 December 2003 by unitary authority area:	36
Cardiff CC	13
Merthyr Tydfil CBC	8
Neath Port Talbot County BC	10
Rhondda Cynon Taff County BC	4
Vale of Glamorgan Council	1

Note:
Between 1 April 1999 to 31 May 2000 data available by police force area (pfa) only.

Reducing Crime/Changing Lives

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the work of the implementation team for the Reducing Crime-Changing Lives reform programme. [170440]

Paul Goggins: Implementing the reforms set out in "Reducing Crime-Changing Lives" is a complex and long-term programme. Full implementation will take several years to be fully concluded. We are currently consulting key stakeholders on our preferred model for the organisational structure of the National Offender Management Service.

Security Patrols

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will implement the recommendation on oversight arrangements in relation to visible security patrols in residential areas set out in the recent Joseph Rowntree Foundation study. [176393]

Ms Blears: Responsibility for co-ordinating the deployment of the extended police family at a local level is a matter for local employers, such as individual chief officers or local authorities, in partnership with other local community safety related organisations. We shall continue to work closely with stakeholders to ensure maximum clarity on how these roles can be best used while not restricting local flexibility. The pending report of the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) Thematic on Civilianisation and the evaluation findings from the £13 million suite of workforce modernisation pilots launched in March 2004 will add to our evidence-base of effective practice.

Sentencing

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many women were serving a prison sentence of more than five years in prisons in England and Wales on 1 May 2004. [173531]

Paul Goggins: On 31 March 2004 there were 844 females serving sentences of more than five years in Prison Service establishments in England and Wales. This is the latest date for which information is available.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women were serving a life sentence in prisons in England and Wales on 1 May 2004. [173532]

Paul Goggins: The total number of prisoners serving life sentences in prison in England and Wales on 31 March 2004 was 5,553, of which 5,378 were male and 175 female.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women were serving prison sentences in England and Wales for sexual offences on 1 May 2004. [173533]

Paul Goggins: On 31 March 2004 there were 5,665 males and 23 females held under sentence in Prison Service establishments in England and Wales for sexual offences. This is the latest date for which information is available.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* male and *(b)* female foreign nationals were serving prison sentences in prisons in England and Wales on 1 May 2004. [173577]

Paul Goggins: On 31 March 2004 there were 5,784 male and 673 female foreign nationals held under sentence in Prison Service establishments in England and Wales. This is the latest date for which information is available.

Sex Offenders

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether people convicted of sex offences abroad are supervised or monitored on their return to the UK. [172354]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* The Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) which we placed on a statutory basis in 2001, provide a robust framework within which sexual and violent offenders are managed on a multi-agency basis in the community. The scope of the MAPPA includes those who were convicted of sexual offences abroad and have returned to the UK.

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 introduced a new civil order—the notification order. This order enables offenders who have been convicted or cautioned for a sexual offence overseas to be made subject to the notification requirements of Part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003. The notification order is an important new tool which will help the police and probation services manage offenders who have committed sexual offences overseas.

The police can also apply to the courts for a sexual offences prevention order (SOPO) to be made against an offender convicted of a sexual offence overseas who is living in the UK and who poses a risk of serious sexual harm. A SOPO can set prohibitions on an offender and will also make him subject to the notification requirements for the duration of the order.

Shrewsbury Prison

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will estimate the cost of replacing the gymnasium at HM Prison Shrewsbury; [171375]

(2) what the expected completion date is for building a new gymnasium at HM Prison Shrewsbury; [171378]

(3) when he expects the design for a new gymnasium at HM Prison Shrewsbury to be completed. [171379]

Paul Goggins: The existing gymnasium at Shrewsbury prison needs to be demolished for health and safety reasons. A business case for the re-development of the site has not yet been completed.

Solvent Abuse

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions were made of retailers selling restricted solvents to children in each of the last seven years. [169065]

Paul Goggins: The available information is contained in the table.

Defendants[1] proceeded against under the Intoxicating Substances (Supply) Act 19852, England and Wales, 1996–2002

1996	4
1997	11
1998	4
1999	9
2000	—
2001	1
2002	—

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.
[2] The offence is to supply or offer to supply any intoxicating substances to a person under the age of 18 where the retailer may reasonably believe that the product will be used for intoxication.

Statistics on court proceedings for 2003 will be published in the autumn.

Statistics (London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many racially aggravated incidents were recorded in each of the last seven years by the Metropolitan police, broken down by local authority area. [173250]

Ms Blears: The available information has been provided by the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis and relates to the number of recorded racially aggravated offences. These data are available only for the last four years.

Racially aggravated offences recorded by the Metropolitan police

	Racially aggravated offences			
	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Barking and Dagenham	407	353	297	350
Barnet	509	427	450	469
Bexley	225	191	185	274
Brent	254	260	216	238
Bromley	198	214	217	243
Camden	291	290	210	217
Croydon	509	286	343	318
Ealing	397	343	289	274
Enfield	383	364	363	173
Greenwich	610	512	568	434
Hackney	297	356	290	310
Hammersmith and Fulham	355	215	201	147
Haringey	255	247	196	131
Harrow	250	26	232	196
Havering	181	160	143	176
Heathrow airport	50	37	38	37
Hillingdon	333	408	356	316
Hounslow	648	649	542	507
Islington	334	370	269	284
Kensington and Chelsea	216	109	126	134
Kingston upon Thames	239	207	194	248
Lambeth	419	324	331	317
Lewisham	446	351	293	266
Merton	408	342	355	340
Newham	693	612	490	450
Redbridge	234	208	232	305
Richmond upon Thames	192	209	217	161
Southwark	517	527	325	409
Sutton	198	213	206	265
Tower Hamlets	612	598	693	567
Waltham Forest	318	297	250	295
Wandsworth	293	319	232	228
Westminster				
Belgravia	657	96	76	75
Charing Cross	—	74	67	75
Marylebone	—	92	107	74
Paddington	—	182	128	105
West End Central	—	93	125	112
Special Ops	1	1	—	—
Annual MPS totals	11,929	10,802	9,858	9,520

Stowaways

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the estimated cost is of his Department's efforts to detect and deter illegal immigrants from entering the UK through concealment in vehicles in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [160377]

Mr. Browne: The costs are as follows:

	Cost (£000)
2001–02	2,178
2002–03	14,049
2003–04 (To January 2004)	4,919

The costs cover both the capital investment and the costs of staff working both in the UK and at the juxtaposed control conducting the following tasks

Physical vehicle searches

The handling of trained people detection dogs

The management of new detection technology equipment

The operation and management of carbon dioxide probes

The annual cost of funding the Immigration and Nationality Directorate is less than 1 per cent. of the Government's Total Managed Expenditure and this will reduce further from next year.

The deployment of new detection technology and the extension of juxtaposed controls are part of a wide range of measures which have contributed to a 52 per cent. reduction in the number of asylum claims and the associated costs of supporting asylum seekers.

Travellers

Mr. Michael Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent discussions he has had with the Irish Government regarding the effect upon police resources of travellers. [170132]

Ms Blears: There have been no discussions specifically on the effect on policing. However I understand that officials from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister are discussing the issue of Travellers with their counterparts in the Irish Republic.

Wiltshire Coroner

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what reports he has received about delays in the holding of inquests by the Wiltshire coroner; and if he will make a statement. [171585]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* The Wiltshire coroner has reported that the investigation, and preparation for the inquest, into the death of Ronald Maddison at Porton Down in 1953 has proved extremely time-consuming and has caused delays to other cases. His county council has appointed an additional assistant deputy coroner in order to deal with the backlog.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Real IRA

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to proscribe the Real IRA under the Terrorism Act 2000; and if he will make a statement. [176968]

Mr. Pearson: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland is responsible for the proscription of groups which are concerned in the terrorism connected with the affairs of Northern Ireland. Following the RIRA judgment, the Attorney-General announced on 28 May that he would refer the ruling to the Court of Appeal. It would be inappropriate to comment further on matters which could be before the Court. It is however the Secretary of State's position that RIRA was proscribed under the Terrorism Act and he remains of the view that RIRA should be proscribed. The Secretary of State has made it clear that he will take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that RIRA is proscribed.

Administration Budget

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made towards the 5 per cent. reduction in real terms in his Department's administration budget by 2008 announced by the Chancellor in the House on 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 331. [176506]

Mr. Pearson: The real terms reduction of 5 per cent. or more will be a central feature of the departmental settlements to be announced later this year in the Northern Ireland Priorities and Budget 2006–08 document.

Assets Recovery Agency

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what recent discussions he has had with the Home Office about increased funding for the Assets Recovery Agency; and if he will make a statement. [176959]

Mr. Pearson: I was consulted by the Home Office on the Assets Recovery Agency's Business Plan for 2004–05. I refer the hon. Lady to the statement made to the House, by my right hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department on 27 May 2004.

Attention Deficit Disorder

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what *(a)* financial support and *(b)* other resources are available to each health board for help to groups assisting individuals who suffer from attention deficit disorder/attention deficit hyperactivity disorder; and what (i) support and (ii) resources are offered by each board to such groups. [173095]

Angela Smith: There is no central specific financial support provided by the Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) services. Boards and trusts may fund local groups providing support to families of children with ADHD, through the Mental Health Programme of Care.

The Eastern Health and Social Services Board has advised that South and East Belfast and Down Lisburn Trusts have offered some limited financial support to the Northern Ireland-ADHD Centre in Belfast.

Autism

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the role of the new Educational Centre of Excellence for Autism will be. [167604]

Mr. Gardiner: It is the intention that the Middletown Centre for Autism will be dedicated to improving the educational opportunities of children and young people with autistic spectrum disorders. Provision will be made for comprehensive educational assessment, individual intervention, training and research support. The centre will be multi-disciplinary and will not replace or prevent the development of local provision, but will seek to enhance or support existing services through collaborative working arrangements.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what services will be provided at the new autism centre of excellence. [169724]

Mr. Gardiner: It is planned that the Middletown Centre for Autism will provide the following services:

- an educational assessment service;
- a learning support service;
- a training and advisory service for parents, teachers and other professionals; and
- a research and information service.

The Centre will be multi-disciplinary in approach and work in collaboration with local services. It will not replace or prevent the development of local provision, but will seek to enhance or support existing services through collaborative working arrangements.

Costello Report

Mr. Mallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when the first meeting of the Strategic Implementation Group following the publication of the Costello Report will take place. [176530]

Mr. Gardiner: Nominations to the Strategic Advisory Group have been sought from the key educational interests. The first meeting of the Group will be arranged

as soon as all the nominations have been finalised. It is hoped that this meeting will take place before the end of the current school year.

Delayed Discharges

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many patients in each hospital have their discharge delayed while awaiting community care packages. [172739]

Angela Smith: The number of delayed discharges recorded in each hospital at 29 February 2004 (the latest date for which such information is available), is as follows.

Number of delayed discharges, by hospital, 29 February 2004

Hospital	Total delayed discharges
Ards	0
Bangor	0
Belfast City	40
Downe	9
Forster Green	2
Lagan Valley	9
Mater Infirmorum	4
Musgrave Park	13
Royal Victoria	46
Ulster	46
Antrim	16
Braid Valley	34
Causeway	14
Coleraine	0
Dalriada	9
Moyle	10
Mid-Ulster	16
Robinson Memorial	2
Whiteabbey	28
Craigavon Area	11
Daisy Hill	11
Loane House	7
Lurgan	15
Mullinure	20
South Tyrone	10
Altnagelvin	9
Erne	6
Tyrone County	4
Northern Ireland total	391

Note:
Information is collected only for hospitals which provide an acute service. Delayed discharges refer to persons delayed in these hospitals while awaiting a community care package.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people have left employment in his Department because of *(a)* anxiety, *(b)* stress, *(c)* depression and *(d)* other mental health reasons in each year since 1997. [175671]

Mr. Pearson: The 11 Departments of the NI Administration and their agencies and the Northern Ireland Office hold readily available information only in respect of the total number of ill-health retirements, details of which are set out in table 1. More detailed information showing the particular cause of actual ill-health retirements could not be obtained without incurring disproportionate costs.

However figures set out in table 2 show the number of recommendations made by the Occupational Health Service of the Northern Ireland Civil Service for ill-health retirement under the general category of mental and behavioural disorders. Such recommendations would normally result in actual retirement but it should be noted that the date of a recommendation for ill-health retirement may fall into a different financial year from that of the actual retirement.

Table 1: NICS ill health retirement

Financial year	Total
2003–04	172
2002–03	189
2001–02	133
2000–01	134
1999–2000	117
1998–99	127
1997–98	130

Note:
Figures for 1997–98 to 1999–2000 are for the six NI Departments and their agencies and NIO.

Table 2: OHS recommendations for ill health retirement due to mental and behavioural disorders

Financial year	Total
2003–04	66
2002–03	59
2001–02	57
2000–01	48
1999–2000	34

Note:
No figures are available for the years 1997–98 and 1998–99.

Drink Driving

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many prosecutions there have been in Northern Ireland in each of the past five years of drivers who had in excess of twice the legal limit of alcohol in their blood. [176629]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has written directly to the hon. Gentleman in response to this Question

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin, dated 1 June 2004.

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about how many incidents of thefts from cars parked in car parks operated by and on behalf of the Department of Regional Development in Northern Ireland there were in 2003. I have been asked to reply as the issue raised falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive Roads Service has over 370 car parks throughout Northern Ireland, of which 45 per cent. are charged and 55 per cent. are free. During 2003 there were some 126 incidents of theft or attempted theft reported by members of the public to car park staff. However since many car parks are unmanned, there may have been additional cases reported directly to the police.

I hope this information is helpful.

General John de Chastelain

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many full days General John de Chastelain spent in Northern Ireland between 1 January and 30 April; and what his salary was for the period. [175219]

Mr. Pearson: Between 1 January 2004 to 30 April 2004 General de Chastelain has spent 10 days in Northern Ireland engaged on decommissioning business. General de Chastelain is paid £600 per diem.

Heart Conditions

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many sudden cardiac deaths there were in each of the last five years, broken down by age range; and if he will make a statement. [175162]

Mr. Pearson: The information requested is not directly available. It is not possible to give an exact number of cardiac deaths which occurred suddenly, as information on whether or not a death was sudden is not currently recorded at death registration. Therefore figures have been provided for all heart diseases, sudden cardiac death (so described), acute ischaemic heart disease and cardiac arrhythmias.

Table: Number of registered deaths by year in Northern Ireland resulting from (a) all heart diseases, (b) sudden cardiac death, so described, (c) acute ischaemic heart disease and (d) cardiac arrhythmias in persons, by age-group, 1999 to 2003

Cause of death/ Registration year	Age group 0–14	15–44	45–64	65–84	85 +
(a) All heart diseases					
1999	3	53	587	2,579	1,114
2000	1	60	500	2,294	1,017
2001	2	41	455	2,278	1,115
2002	1	46	484	2,143	1,082
2003[1]	0	64	410	1,959	1,055
(b) Sudden cardiac death, so described					
1999	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
2000	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
2001	0	0	0	0	0
2002	0	0	0	0	0
2003[1]	0	0	0	0	0
(c) Acute ischaemic heart disease					
1999	0	22	370	1,597	525
2000	0	24	302	1,465	513
2001	0	10	292	1,423	536
2002	0	19	272	1,273	514
2003[1]	0	21	230	1,179	540
(d) Cardiac arrhythmias					
1999	1	2	1	29	22
2000	1	4	2	23	15
2001	0	1	3	43	36
2002	0	3	5	54	36
2003[1]	0	0	4	36	38

[1] Data for 2003 are provisional.
[2] Figures only available from 2001, after the introduction of the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) for coding cause of death.

Heart Transplants

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many patients under the age of 16 are awaiting heart transplants in Northern Ireland. [176253]

Angela Smith: There are no patients under the age of 16 currently awaiting heart transplants in Northern Ireland.

Heating Costs

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the annual cost of heating an average domestic property in Northern Ireland by *(a)* electricity, *(b)* solid fuel and *(c)* natural gas. [175860]

Mr. Spellar: The following table contains the most recent available space and water heating costs for the fuel types across Northern Ireland.

Fuel		Type of heating system	Annual cost of space and water heating for average size houses, (£) 2 bed	3 bed	4 bed
Solid Fuel	House coal—Group 2	Open fire with back boiler radiators and Domestic Hot Water cylinder	562	740	1,046
	Anthracite Nuts—'Burnglo'	Room heater with back boiler Radiators and Domestic Hot Water cylinder	530	694	973
	Anthracite Grains	Gravity feed boiler Radiators and Domestic Hot Water cylinder	498	655	926
Electricity	Standard Domestic Tariff	Electric radiators, immersion water heater	1,266	1,711	2,510
	Economy 7 Tariff 1	Storage heaters living rooms, Electric radiators bedrooms, Immersion water heater	562	747	1,083
Natural Gas	Phoenix Natural gas Home Energy Tariff (Including optional Direct	Gas fired boiler, Radiators and Domestic Hot Water cylinder			

Fuel	Type of heating system	Annual cost of space and water heating for average size houses, (£) 2 bed	3 bed	4 bed
	Debit Discount)	474	618	870
	Gas fired condensing boiler, Radiators and Domestic Hot Water cylinder	395	512	718

Source:
Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of domestic properties in Northern Ireland are heated by *(a)* electricity, *(b)* solid fuel and *(c)* natural gas. [175861]

Mr. Spellar: The information is as follows:

Fuel source	Percentage
Mains Gas	3.2
Solid Fuel	14.3
Electric	8.3
Dual	9.5

Note:
Dual heating is either solid fuel and electric or solid fuel and oil.
Source:
Home Energy Conservation Report 2003, NIHE.

Invest Northern Ireland

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many visits have been made under the auspices of Invest Northern Ireland by potential inward investors to each constituency within the past 12 months; and how many jobs have been created as a result in each. [171740]

Mr. Gardiner: Over the past year (April 2003 to March 2004) there have been 211 visits by potential inward investors to the Parliamentary constituency areas of Northern Ireland. These are detailed in the following table.

Constituency	Number of visits
North Antrim	1
South Antrim	10
East Antrim	5
North Belfast	39
East Belfast	40
South Belfast	54
West Belfast	17
North Down	2
Strangford	1
South Down	1
Newry and Armagh	5
Lagan Valley	4
Upper Bann	6
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	1
Mid Ulster	1
West Tyrone	4
Foyle	18
East Londonderry	2
Total	211

Securing inward investment is the result of extensive work over an extended period which may involve a number of visits. As a consequence it must be recognised that there is a time lag between visits by potential investors and ultimately securing investment. Recognising this fact, during the past year (April 2003 to March 2004) Invest NI secured 11 new inward investment projects as a result of which 1,099 new jobs will be promoted (i.e. are expected to be created). The final constituency locations for all of the 11 projects have not yet been finalised. Not all of the 11 companies visited Northern Ireland during 2003–04, many visited during previous years.

Maghaberry Prison

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what reports he has received of physical and mental abuse of persons inside HMP Maghaberry, with particular reference to the *(a)* excessive use of strip-searching and *(b)* restricted movement of inmates; and if he will make a statement. [177189]

Mr. Pearson: I have received representations from the Ulster Political Research Group expressing their concern at the use of full-body searching at Maghaberry prison. Searching of accommodation and prisioners is a vital part of the prison routine and is essential in order to protect the safety of both prisoners and staff. I was able to assure the UPRG representatives that the level of searching that takes place in Maghaberry is the same across the rest of the UK for similar category prisoners.

Milk Cup Tournament

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what support his Department provides to the Milk Cup Football tournament. [175907]

Angela Smith: The Northern Ireland Events Company The Northern Ireland Events Company has provided funding for the Northern Ireland Milk Cup as set out in the table.

	£
2001–02	90,000
2002–03	90,000
2003–04	180,000
Total	360,000

The Northern Ireland Events Company have also agreed funding of £80,000 towards the 2004 event.

The Northern Ireland Tourist Board

A total of £25,000 grant payment was made by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board in the period 2001–03 towards marketing costs of the Milk Cup Football tournament. £5,000 was provided for the 2001 Milk Cup tournament while £10,000 was provided for the 2002 tournament and again for the 2003 tournament.

Motor Cycling

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what his latest estimate is of the value to the Northern Ireland economy of the races and events associated with *(a)* the North West 200 motorcycle races and *(b)* the Circuit of Ireland Rally. [170246]

Mr. Gardiner: Government do not collect this information and are therefore not in a position to estimate their value to the Northern Ireland economy.

However, the Northern Ireland Events Company (NIEC) provide financial support towards the North West 200. Based on information from the event organisers the NIEC will draw up a post evaluation report. This information will include bed revenue and tourist spend and will be required from the organisers within eight weeks of the date of the event.

Based on figures for previous years provided by Coleraine borough council it is estimated that the North West 200 will generate approximately £5.6 million tourism revenue to the Northern Ireland economy in 2004.

Figures are not available for the Circuit of Ireland rally.

MS Treatment

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many patients are waiting to commence beta interferon or glatiramer for multiple sclerosis treatment; and if he will make a statement.[173605]

Angela Smith: At 20 May 2004 there were 76 patients on the waiting list for disease-modifying treatments such as beta interferon or glatiramer; included in this number are a small number of patients who have signalled that they do not wish to commence treatment as yet.

My Department remains committed to introducing drugs that offer the potential for significant improvement in patient care. There is a growing demand for treatment with disease-modifying drugs for people who suffer from MS and substantial extra funding has been made available to Health and Social Services Boards for these and other specialist medicines. However, despite this additional investment, there continue to be waiting lists for treatment due to the increasing levels of demand. My Department will continue to seek additional resources for specialist medicines that offer the potential for significant improvement in patient care.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many patients are receiving *(a)* beta interferon and *(b)* glatiramer for multiple sclerosis; and how many of each have commenced treatment since 1 January. [173607]

Angela Smith: At 20 May 2004 there were 513 patients receiving disease-modifying treatments such as beta interferon or glatiramer, with a further 17 currently suspended from treatment at present.

During the period from 1 January 2004 to 31 May 2004, 26 patients have commenced treatment.

National Lottery

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much Lottery funding has been allocated to sporting organisations relating to *(a)* soccer, *(b)* rugby and *(c)* hockey in Northern Ireland since the introduction of the Lottery. [175723]

Angela Smith: Since the National Lottery began the Sports Council for Northern Ireland's Lottery Fund has allocated the following funding to sporting organisations in relation to soccer, rugby and hockey in Northern Ireland:

	£ million
Soccer	6.28
Rugby	1.63
Hockey	1.99

Police Service

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) how many recruits undergoing training with the Police Service of Northern Ireland have criminal convictions; and for what offence in each case; [176684]

(2) how many recruits undergoing training with the Police Service of Northern Ireland have relatives with criminal convictions; and for what offence in each case. [176685]

Mr. Spellar: The information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost. However all successful applicants who enter the Training College have met the criminal convictions criteria set out in the Police Recruitment Regulations 2001 and the criteria under the vetting procedure. This includes close family members.

Police Trophies

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether an official record exists of *(a)* competition trophies, *(b)* presentations to Station Parties and *(c)* other items belonging to the (i) Royal Ulster Constabulary, (ii) Royal Ulster Constabulary Reserve and (iii) associated bodies at the time of their inclusion within the Police Service of Northern Ireland; and where those items are located. [176332]

Mr. Pearson: The Police Service of Northern Ireland have advised me that all sporting trophies presented to the RUC or RUC Reserve are the property of the Athletic Association and that no official police records of such trophies exist.

No official records exists of presentations to Station Parties or of other items belonging to the RUC or RUC Reserve and of their location. Such a list could be compiled only at disproportionate expense.

PPP Contracts

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many times the principal private public partnerships officer with the South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) met the Chief Executive of the SEELB over the past year to brief him on the development of negotiations in relation to the private public partnership scheme involving Comber

High School and Bangor Academy; what matters were discussed on each occasion; and for what reasons the Chief Executive of the SEELB did not inform staff in March that jobs would be transferred from the Board to the preferred bidder in January 2006. [174009]

Mr. Gardiner: I have been informed that the Chief Executive of the South Eastern Education and Library Board met with the Head of the PPP Education Service/ Project Manager for the Bangor and Comber Project on 35 occasions since 17 May 2003 to brief him on the Bangor and Comber Project. All aspects of the project were discussed including those relating to legal, financial, technical, facilities management, staffing and consortia/bids.

On 26 March 2002, meetings were held with caretaking, cleaning and catering staff in both Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College and Comber High School. Staff were informed that transfers were likely.

School based staff were kept informed throughout the process through their line managers; line managers were kept informed through monthly briefing meetings chaired by a senior officer of the SEELB.

On 15 January, 2004 meetings were held in both Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College and Comber High School. Staff were informed that transfers were likely.

On 4 February, 2004 meetings were held in both Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College and Comber High School to allow staff to meet representatives of Jarvis. The caretakers of both schools attended; other staff did not.

On 9 March 2004 the SEELB issued a letter to the catering, cleaning and caretaking staff in Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College and Comber High School informing them of Jarvis proposals and of the intent to establish a series of union meetings and the date of the first meeting.

Trade unions were kept informed throughout the process and were furnished with documentation and opportunity to discuss staffing issues with the shortlisted bidders. This is in line with the Information and Communication memorandum as agreed by the trade unions, the five education and library boards and CCMS through the PPP Service Information and Communication Forum.

Pre-School Places

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many Pre-School Education Advisory Group (PEAG) places were allocated to each *(a)* private playschool and *(b)* state nursery unit in the Dundonald area in 2004–05; how many applications were received on behalf of children living in the Dundonald area seeking a pre-school place for their final pre-school year, at each pre-school facility; how many children living in the Dundonald area failed to obtain a PEAG place for their final pre-school year; and how many PEAG places were awarded to pre-school facilities in Dundonald for children under the age of three in 2004–05. [174007]

Mr. Gardiner: The information requested is as follows.

Pre-school providers in the Dundonald area	*Places available*	*Number of applicants with Dundonald addresses at first preference*
King's Road Nursery School	52 full-time places	24
Brooklands Nursery Unit	26 full-time places, 52 part-time places	79
Ballybeen Women's Centre Playgroup	16	12

The pre-school admissions process was completed on 31 March. At that date 17 children from the Dundonald area did not gain a place in one of their preferred settings. The local Education and Library Board has provided the parents of these children with details of unfilled pre-school places in the wider area.

There were no places awarded to children under the age of three in 2004–05.

Road Building

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the estimated cost is of providing a dual carriageway between *(a)* Ballygawley and Omagh, *(b)* Omagh and Strabane and *(c)* Strabane and Londonderry. [176330]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has written directly to the hon. Gentleman in response to this Question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin to Mr. David Burnside dated 1 June 2004:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question asking what the estimated cost is of providing a dual carriageway between *(a)* Bally gawley and Omagh, *(b)* Omagh and Strabane and *(c)* Strabane and Londonderry. I have been asked to reply as the issue raised falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

	£ million
Preliminary estimates for the provision of these lengths of dual carriageway are:	
Ballygawley to Omagh (including bypass)	110–153
Omagh Strabane	139–192
Strabane (including bypass) to Londonderry (Craigavon Bridge)	97–135

I would stress the preliminary nature of these estimated costs. No feasibility studies or surveys have been undertaken of possible schemes and thus alignments for such schemes have not been identified. The costs assume a mixture of agricultural and development lands, are based on approximate lengths using typical costs, and depend on the standard of road provided.

I trust this information is helpful.

Sustainable Transport Plan

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the progress being made on the implementation of a sustainable transport plan for Northern Ireland. [176542]

Mr. Spellar: The Regional Transportation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002–2012 sets out a strategic framework for the future planning, funding and delivery of an integrated, sustainable transport system for the region. The Transportation Vision of the RTS is

"To have a modern, sustainable, safe transportation system which benefits society, the economy and the environment and which actively contributes to social inclusion and everyone's quality of life."

The Strategy seeks to address the effect of years of under-investment in transportation. It tackles deficiencies in the current transportation systems to make best use of existing assets and introduces a number of important enhancements to the infrastructure and services. At the same time, programmes have been initiated to promote sustainable transport, such as walking, cycling and public transport, and to encourage modes of travel other than private car for appropriate journeys.

An Annual Monitoring Report for 2003–04 on the progress to date in implementing the RTS is currently being prepared and will be published in September. Copies of the Report will be made available in the Library.

Teachers

Mr. Mallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has for the publication and circulation of the second part of the Curran Report into teachers' salaries and conditions of service. [176679]

Mr. Gardiner: The Independent Inquiry's Final Report Part 2 is detailed and its recommendations have significant financial implications. The Department is currently costing these and the Report will be published and circulated in due course.

Titanic Quarter (Tourist Facilities)

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans are in place for the development of tourist facilities and attractions at the Titanic Quarter in Belfast by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board; and if he will make a statement. [174092]

Mr. Gardiner: The recent 'Tourism in Northern Ireland—A Strategic Framework for Action 2004–07' has identified Belfast, and in particular its historical connections with Titanic (Maritime) Belfast, as one of five signature projects for Northern Ireland tourism.

Belfast city council and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board intend to commission research into realising the potential of the 'Titanic' theme for Belfast and Northern Ireland.

Trevor Kell

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what representations he has received about the investigation into the murder of Trevor Kell in December 2000 in North Belfast. [169234]

Mr. Pearson: The Government have received a variety of correspondence concerning the investigation of the murder of Trevor Kell.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the status of investigations into the murder of Trevor Kell in North Belfast in December 2000. [169235]

Mr. Pearson: The murder of Trevor Kell is an ongoing investigation. A number of persons were arrested and interviewed but released without charge, due to lack of evidence. The police will continue to pursue any new line of inquiry to help develop and progress this inquiry.

Water/Sewage Pipes

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will estimate the annual cost of leaking or damaged water and sewage pipes in each of the last five years. [168193]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Water Service (Mrs. Katharine Bryan) has written to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Mrs. Katharine Bryan to Mr. Roy Beggs dated 27 April 2004:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question (No. 1259) about the annual cost of leaking or damaged water and sewage pipes in each of the last five years. I have been asked to reply as Chief Executive of the Water Service.

Water Service undertakes regular and extensive maintenance and repair work on the water and sewerage infrastructure, including repairs to burst watermains and blocked sewers, maintenance of valves and hydrants and desilting of sewers. Over the last five years Water Service has spent £76.1 million on such work. The annual breakdown is as follows:

	Cost (£ million)
	13.8
1999–2000	13.8
2000–01	15.6
2001–02	16.3
2002–03	16.6
2003–04	

In addition to maintenance and repairs, Water Service has also invested £282 million on upgrading watermains and sewers over the last five years, as part of the ongoing investment programme to comply with EU Directives, protect the environment and deliver customer service improvements.

HEALTH

Dentistry

11. **Mr. Paul Marsden:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make a statement on access to NHS dentists in Shropshire. [177295]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are currently 100 general dental services dentists providing National Health Service dental care in Shropshire County Primary Care Trust.

There is a dental access centre in Shrewsbury and six further outreach centres throughout Shropshire County.

18. **Mr. David Kidney:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make a statement on his Department's consultation with the dental profession regarding the changes to the way NHS dentistry will be organised from April 2005. [177302]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We are implementing the biggest reform of NHS dentistry since 1948. We have just completed a consultation with representative bodies of the dental profession on our "Framework Proposals for Primary Care Dental Services in England"; this concluded on the 30 of April.

NHS Funding

17. **Norman Baker:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of funds available to NHS trusts in East Sussex. [177301]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Between 2003–04 and 2005–06, the seven primary care trusts across Sussex will receive increases of £280 million. PCTs, in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders, determine how best to use their funds to meet national and local priorities for improving health, tackling health inequalities and modernising services.

23. **Andrew George:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment he has made of the financial situation of NHS trusts in Cornwall and Scilly. [177307]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In line with the Government's policy of shifting the balance of power, the responsibility for the performance and financial management of NHS Trusts rests with Strategic Health Authorities. The latest financial returns submitted by the South West Peninsula Strategic Health Authority forecasts an overall end of year deficit of £14 million for all organisations within the South West Peninsula health economy. The Strategic Health Authority is working closely with the NHS organisations in Cornwall in order to achieve financial recovery, while ensuring that the local health community continues to achieve its key targets.

Diabetes

19. **Tony Lloyd:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make a statement on best practice for the delivery of services for diabetics. [177303]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The National Service Framework for Diabetes sets out the Government's vision for making the best practice in diabetes services already offered in some places in the National Health Service the norm throughout. The National Service Framework sets out the steps that the NHS locally can take to ensure that this vision becomes a reality.

NHS Staff (Overseas Recruitment)

20. **Mrs. Roe:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the number of health workers in the NHS who have been recruited from overseas. [177304]

Mr. Hutton: This information is not held centrally. Regulatory Bodies provide statistical analyses annually of those health care professionals entitled to practice in the United Kingdom.

International recruitment makes a key contribution to services in the national health service and is a two way process. Welcoming staff from abroad enables the transfer of experience and the sharing of ideas.

Nurses

21. **Mrs. Fitzsimons:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on developing the role of nurses in the delivery of health care. [177305]

Mr. Hutton: Developing the role of nurses has been at the centre of the government's plans for improving health services. Patients are benefiting from the most comprehensive programme ever that is increasing the number of nurses, creating new roles such as nurse consultants, and extending their responsibilities in prescribing, ordering investigations and referring patients to other professionals.

Community Pharmacists

22. **Mr. Jim Cunningham:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the Government's plans for community pharmacists. [177306]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We are currently negotiating a new contractual framework for community pharmacy with the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee. We want to implement this as soon as is practicable.

We have considered the report of the expert Advisory Group on reforming the current NHS regulatory system and will make further announcements shortly.

Private Finance Initiative (West Yorkshire)

24. **Mr. Bill O'Brien:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the private finance initiative development in the area of Mid Yorkshire Acute Trust; and what bed provision will be made in the three areas covered by the Pontefract, Wakefield and Dewsbury Trust. [177308]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Mid Yorkshire NHS Trust is working with its partner Primary Care Trusts to agree a final design brief for the Private Finance Initiative scheme. The trust expects to announce its preferred bidder for the PFI scheme by October 2004. The provision of acute beds will reflect good practice in the care of patients across community and hospital settings.

Residential Care

25. **Mr. Amess:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the availability of residential care for the elderly. [177309]

Dr. Ladyman: The National Care Standards Commission report "How do we care?", published in March 2004, reported that there were 12,990 registered care homes with 371,200 places for older people at 31 October 2003.

Apnoea

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the number of sleep apnoea patients being treated with continuous positive airway pressure machines. [176858]

Dr. Ladyman: The information is not available centrally in the form requested.

The figures showing counts of admissions to hospital for sleep apnoea are shown in the table.

Primary diagnosis (ICD-10 G47.3, P28.3) sleep apnoea—count of finished admission episodes—national health service hospitals, England 2000–01 to 2002–03

Diagnosis		2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
G47.3	Sleep apnoea (excluding newborns)	10,709	11,098	11,479
P28.3	Primary sleep apnoea of newborn	67	60	57
Total		10,786	11,158	11,536

Notes:
1. A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
2. The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 (seven prior to 2002–03) diagnosis fields in the Hospital Episode Statistics data set and provides the main reason why the patient was in hospital.
3. Figures are grossed for both coverage and missing/invalid clinical data for 2000–01. For 2001–02 and 2002–03, figures are not yet adjusted for shortfalls.

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics, Department of Health.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many sleep apnoea clinics there are within the NHS. [176860]

Dr. Ladyman: That information is not available centrally.

Primary care trusts and other local stakeholders are responsible for assessing the health needs of their populations, including those with sleep disorders, and commissioning services to meet those needs. Sleep services are provided as part of the overall service package that primary care trusts and other local stakeholders develop for their local populations.

Asthma

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hospital episodes there were where the primary diagnosis was asthma, using the International Classification of Disease 10 codes J45-J46, in each year since 1996 *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down by (i) health authority and (ii) age. [177477]

Dr. Ladyman: Figures for admitted patient care finished consultant episodes held by the hospital episodes statistics data warehouse for 1996–97 to 2002–03, broken down by health authority of residence and age, have been placed in the Library.

Care Home Closures

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance he issues to local authorities on criteria to be satisfied before a decision is taken to close a care home; if he will assess the extent to which the criteria were satisfied in the recent decision by Sefton Council to close Connolly House and Linacre Grange, Bootle; if he will re-examine the criteria; and if he will ask Sefton Council to reconsider its decision. [171748]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* Local councils are responsible for arranging and delivering services that will meet the assessed needs of their local populations. It is for each council to decide which services they should provide in order to meet those needs. In so doing, they are under an obligation to act reasonably.

If it becomes necessary to close a care home, councils, acting both as commissioners and providers, should seek to achieve this in a planned way. There are a number of court decisions which set out the nature of councils' obligations towards residents in care homes which councils must have regard to. One of these obligations is to consult residents on any proposed closure.

The Government are concerned that any decision to close a home is handled as sensitively and appropriately as possible, but are limited in the extent to which they can intervene in local decisions. Councils are obliged to comply with statutory obligations and relevant case law. When a home does have to close, the essential thing is that proper arrangements are made for the safe and satisfactory transfer of all residents to other suitable homes. There should be adequate time for this to be done, in a way that allows both residents and their relatives a choice in where they are to move to and which creates the minimum possible discomfort to all concerned.

The Secretary of State does not intervene in decisions of this nature at local level. The relevant legislation and the Secretary of State's Approvals and Directions set out the extent of council's obligations to provide services to persons in their area. The council has statutory obligations to meet the needs of any residents it has placed in these homes, and if the homes are closed, it must ensure that those obligations are fulfilled in some other way. It must also comply with its obligations to consult all residents and to take into account their views. It is a matter for all councils to ensure that they comply with their legal obligations. If they do not, this may be challenged through local complaints procedures, the commissioner for local administration, and through the courts.

Carers

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many carers have had their needs assessed *(a)* in the North West and *(b)* in Warrington since the introduction of such assessment. [176410]

Dr. Ladyman: The table shows the number of carers who have been assessed in the North West and Warrington for the years 2000–01 to 2002–03.

Data for previous years is not available.

Number of carers[1] who have been assessed in the North West and Warrington, 2000–01 to 2002–03.

Rounded numbers

	North West[2]	Warrington
2000–01	31,820	250
2001–02	40,440	260
2002–03	34,860	720

[1] Care should be taken when comparing data across the years as recording practices, levels of completion and quality may have changed.
[2] Includes estimates for missing data.
Source:
RAP form A4.

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) which primary care trusts have taken steps to ensure that the services recommended by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence in the guidelines on the management of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease in primary and secondary care are provided to patients in their area; and if he will make a statement; [176550]

(2) what progress has been made in the implementation of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence guidelines on the management of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease in primary and secondary care since the guidelines were published; and if he will make a statement; [176551]

(3) what steps he will take to ensure primary care trusts implement National Institute for Clinical Excellence recommendations within a three-month period; and if he will make a statement. [176552]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answers 7 June 2004]:* Information is not available centrally on the steps taken by individual primary care trusts to implement the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) guideline.

The Healthcare Commission will inspect against healthcare standards. The healthcare standards were published on 10 February 2004 and were out for consultation until 4 May. NICE guidance features at two places within the standards. Within the core standards (under clinical and cost effectiveness, NICE appraisals are included; and under the developmental standards, NICE clinical guidelines are shown. The developmental standards are aspirational and for the NHS to implement over a longer period of time.

National health service bodies are under a statutory obligation to provide funding for drugs and treatments recommended in NICE technology appraisal guidance within three months of publication. This obligation does not apply to the clinical guideline on chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Continuing Care

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on what date information will be made available from the review of NHS continuing care in nine strategic health authorities; and if he will make a statement. [177562]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department is currently considering the report of the review of national health service continuing care in nine strategic health authorities. The report itself will be published in due course.

Doctors' Language Tests

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance his Department has given to hospital trusts on training of overseas doctors in English language skills. [177463]

Mr. Hutton: The Department's guidance, "Health Service Circular 1999/137: Employment of European Economic Area (EEA) Nationals", which is available in the Library, makes clear that it is the responsibility of employers to ensure that all staff have the necessary language skills to carry out their duties safely, regardless of which country they come from.

Dr. Andrew Holton

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funds have been set aside by his Department in relation to *(a)* compensation payments to and *(b)* possible legal costs incurred by patients or patients' families and next of kin in response to claims arising out of treatment by Doctor Andrew Holton, a former consultant paediatrician at Leicester Royal Infirmary. [177471]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* The National Health Service Litigation Agency is dealing with all negligence claims as a result of the actions of Dr. Andrew Holton.

Detailed information about these claims is confidential and as such its disclosure could be prejudicial to the outcome of the current cases.

Bamford Inquiry

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment he has made of the findings of *(a)* his Department's regional office inquiry commissioned by Professor Lindsay Davies and chaired by Dr. Margaret Bamford, *(b)* the General Medical Council's investigation and *(c)* the University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust inquiry into the professional conduct of and treatment of his patients by Dr. Andrew Holton with particular reference to (i) the independence of the inquiry teams and (ii) their prior knowledge of or professional connections with Dr. Holton and his work; and if he will make a statement; [177472]

(2) what assessment he has made of the evidence given to the Bamford Inquiry by Dr. Mark Anthony Edgar; and if he will make a statement. [177473]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* The independent inquiry panel members were chosen specifically because they had no connection with this issue, Dr. Holton's practice or the geographical area. The local clinical investigation involved independent experts from the British Paediatric Neurology Association.

It would be inappropriate to comment on the General Medical Council's investigations of Dr. Holton's professional competence. Ministers are not able to comment on the clinical competence of individual practitioners.

Conclusions drawn from evidence provided by individual witnesses is the responsibility of the inquiry panel. It would not be appropriate to comment on any evidence submitted as part of the inquiry.

Family Planning Clinics

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many attendances of those aged 11 to 19 years there were at family planning clinics in the Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Avon Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000, broken down by age; [176121]

(2) how many women aged 11 to 19 years were fitted with a contraceptive implant since 2000 in the Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Avon Strategic Health Authority, broken down by age. [176124]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave to my hon. Friends, the Members for Workington (Tony Cunningham) and Heywood and Middleton (Jim Dobbin) on 7 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 34–36W.

Mental Health

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research his Department has commissioned and undertaken in conjunction with the Home Office into *(a)* the provision of child and adolescent mental health services, *(b)* early intervention of educational psychologist services and *(c)* offending behaviour in young people; and if he will make a statement. [176058]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department is working very closely with the Home Office and the Department for Education and Skills to establish a framework for the improvement of services for young people with mental health needs, including those at risk of offending behaviour. Developing a shared understanding of those interventions that are effective is essential to this programme of work.

The projects shown in the table have been funded jointly with the Home Office:

Principal investigator	*Host institution*	*Project title*	*Completion date*
Professor Jonathon Hill	University of Liverpool	A pilot study of a new intervention for hard to treat children with conduct disorder	September 2006
Professor Richard Harrington	University of Manchester	A pilot randomised study of an intensive multi-modal cognitive behavioural programme for adolescent offenders in secure care	February 2006
Professor Robert Plomin	Institute of Psychiatry	Investigating the aetiology and developmental pathways related to the emergence of psychopathic tendencies in children	December 2005
Professor Anita Thaper	University of Wales	A longitudinal study of clinical, genetic and environmental risk factors for juvenile anti-social personality disorder in a high risk group	June 2005

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many specialist psychiatric centres specifically for children and adolescents with mental health problems there are in England and Wales; where they are located; how many consultant paediatric psychiatrists and psychologists work in them; what plans he has to develop further such centres; and if he will make a statement. [177512]

Dr. Ladyman: Information is not collected in the format requested. The 2002 child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) mapping exercise identified 732 CAMHS teams in England. The teams ranged from those serving a local community, a regional service and those with a national remit. As of 30 December 2003, there were 461 whole-time equivalent consultants in England working in the speciality of child and adolescent psychiatry.

The national service framework for children, due to be published later this year, will outline how a comprehensive child and adolescent mental health service may be provided. However, how these services are delivered is best decided locally.

Information on the situation in Wales is the responsibility of the Welsh Assembly.

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many representations he has received in relation to (i) waiting lists for appointments with child psychologists and (ii) shortages of educational psychologists in mainstream and special needs schools in England in each year since 2001; and if he will make a statement. [177517]

Dr. Ladyman: None. However, we recognise that further work needs to be done to reduce the waiting time for child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). To help achieve this and also meet our target of having a comprehensive service in every area by March 2006, in the three years to March 2006 we shall be investing an additional £300 million in CAMHS provided by the national health service and local authorities.

Decisions on the recruitment, retention and deployment of educational psychologists (EPs) are matters for local authorities as employers to determine in light of local circumstances and available resources.

The Department for Education and Skills, which has the lead Government responsibility, is aware there are shortages of EPs in some areas. It has facilitated discussions involving a range of partners, including representatives of the Local Government Association, on developing a new shorter entry training route for EPs.

NHS Independent Reconfiguration Panel

Dr. Richard Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much the chairman of the NHS Independent Reconfiguration Panel receives in salary. [177299]

Mr. Hutton: For the year ending 5 April 2004 the Chairman of the Independent Reconfiguration Panel received a salary of twenty three thousand three hundred and three pounds and 54 pence (£23,303.54).

NHS Upper Age Limits

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what is the upper age limit for *(a)* heart bypass surgery and *(b)* kidney dialysis in the NHS; and if he will make a statement. [177576]

Dr. Ladyman: The older people's national service framework makes clear that national health service services should be provided, regardless of age, on the basis of clinical need alone. There is no upper age limit for either bypass surgery or kidney dialysis.

PFI

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to extend the private finance initiative programme. [177018]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* The private finance initiative (PFI) is helping to deliver the biggest hospital building programme in the history of the national health service. Of the 107 PFI hospital schemes announced since 1997, 38 are already operational and a further 22 are under construction.

In January 2004, I announced the next prioritisation round. This called for expressions of interest from strategic health authorities; trusts submitted their strategic outline cases in April. I expect to make a further announcement in the summer.

Policy Collaborative Programme

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will publish the external evaluation of the first phase of the Department's policy collaborative programme. [173840]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Copies of the evaluation report will be placed in the Library.

Public Bodies

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many times a year the Board of the Advisory Committee on Distinction Awards is scheduled to meet; and when it last met. [175345]

Dr. Ladyman: The last meeting of the Advisory Committee on Distinction Awards was on 7 October 2003. It has since been succeeded by the Advisory Committee on Clinical Excellence Awards, which convenes annually. 13 regional sub-committees in England and one in Wales support the central committee. They meet two or three times a year.

Spondylolisthesis

Mr. Colman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research he has commissioned into spondylolisthesis. [177106]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* The Medical Research Council (MRC) currently supports three on-going clinical trials looking at interventions to relieve low back pain, including both recurrent and chronic back pain that may be of relevance to spondylolisthesis. A further MRC trial has recently been completed and the results are soon to be published. The clinical trials include comparison of the effectiveness of surgery to stabilise the spine with physiotherapy rehabilitation, and comparisons of various other interventions including exercise and manipulation by massage, chiropractors, osteopaths, or physiotherapists, and use of the Alexander technique.

Mr. Colman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advice has been given to primary care trusts on treatment of spondylolisthesis. [177148]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* No advice has been given to primary care trusts on the treatment of spondylolisthesis. However, the Department is driving forward a major programme of work to improve equality of access to all national health service treatment and care services. Priorities for health and social care are set out in "Improvement, Expansion and Reform", the priorities and planning framework for 2003–06. Although spondylolisthesis is not identified specifically, people with this condition stand to benefit from the general improvement in access to specialist care we are bringing about, including for patients with any form of orthopaedic condition.

Teenage Cancer

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to address problems with fertility amongst teenage cancer sufferers. [172794]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Currently, many teenage girls and boys are advised to consider having their eggs/embryos or sperm stored for future fertility treatment. Fertility problems among teenage cancer sufferers will be included in the upcoming National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidance on child and adolescent cancers.

This guidance is expected to be published in February 2005 and will specifically address specialist follow up for the late effects of treatment, including fertility, along with allied treatment services children and adolescents with cancer may need, such as fertility services.

This guidance will take into account the fertility guidance already published by NICE in February 2004, which recommended early specialist referral when there is a known reason for infertility, such as prior treatment for cancer.

TREASURY

Pensions

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many pensioners there have been in each year since 1979; and how many there are projected to be in each year to 2020, broken down by gender. [177558]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. David Willetts, dated 8 June 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your question concerning the number of pensioners for each year from 1979 to 2020. (177558)

The attached table shows the population over state pension age in England and Wales, broken down by gender. The present state pension age is 65 for males and 60 for females. This will remain the case until 2010, after which the state pension age for females will rise progressively to 65 between 2010 and 2020.

Mid 2002 population estimates are the latest available, therefore projections are shown for mid-2003 to mid-2020.

Estimated[1] and projected[2] mid-year population aged over the state pension age[3] England and Wales, 1979–2020

Thousands

Year	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
1979	8,696	2,907	5,789
1980	8,837	2,950	5,887
1981	8,928	2,970	5,958
1982	8,980	2,970	6,010
1983	8,993	2,947	6,046
1984	9,016	2,936	6,080
1985	9,117	3,014	6,103
1986	9,190	3,072	6,118
1987	9,250	3,123	6,127
1988	9,291	3,158	6,133
1989	9,337	3,192	6,145
1990	9,363	3,217	6,146
1991	9,400	3,248	6,152
1992	9,422	3,274	6,147
1993	9,435	3,297	6,138
1994	9,430	3,314	6,116
1995	9,449	3,340	6,109
1996	9,465	3,365	6,100
1997	9,484	3,389	6,095
1998	9,521	3,414	6,107
1999	9,543	3,433	6,110
2000	9,579	3,460	6,119
2001	9,627	3,505	6,122
2002	9,689	3,552	6,137
2003	9,780	3,603	6,177
2004	9,886	3,653	6,232
2005	9,999	3,703	6,295
2006	10,111	3,743	6,368
2007	10,310	3,797	6,513
2008	10,514	3,878	6,637
2009	10,705	3,969	6,737
2010	10,840	4,063	6,777
2011	10,864	4,162	6,702
2012	10,950	4,325	6,624
2013	11,014	4,464	6,550
2014	11,051	4,577	6,474
2015	11,078	4,676	6,402
2016	11,091	4,763	6,328
2017	11,104	4,846	6,259
2018	11,115	4,928	6,187
2019	11,126	5,009	6,117
2020	11,174	5,085	6,090

Sources:
Office for National Statistics[1]
Government Actuary's Department[2]
[1] Estimates for 1992–2002
[2] Projections for 2003–2020
[3] State pension age is presently 65 for males and 60 for females. This will remain the case until 2010, after which the pension age for females will rise progressively to 65 between 2010 and 2020.

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the proportion of people over 75 years with a personal pension who will take up the option in the proposed reform of pension taxation of an alternatively secured pension. [176823]

Ruth Kelly: The proposed Alternatively Secured Pension (ASP) will be a way of providing a secure retirement income after age 75. It will be attractive to those with personal pensions who, on religious or other grounds, object to the pooling of mortality risk in an annuity. We do not anticipate significant numbers of people will choose this option.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his latest estimate is of *(a)* the assets and *(b)* the liabilities of occupational pension schemes. [177547]

Ruth Kelly: The Government does not monitor the level of liabilities in occupational pension schemes. The Government Actuaries Department's 11th Survey of occupational pension schemes for the year 2000 estimated total occupational scheme assets to be around £860 billion.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of corporation tax revenue forgone on employer contributions into pension schemes in each year since 1997–98; and what projections he has made for the future. [177561]

Ruth Kelly: No estimates are available.

16 to18-year-olds

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many 16 to 18-year-olds there were in the UK in each three month period ending in November in each year since 1997; and how many of those were not in full-time education, training or work in each of those periods. [177554]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. David Willetts, dated 8 June 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about 16 to 18 year olds who are not in employment. (177554)

The attached table gives estimates of the levels of young people aged 16 to 18 resident in the United Kingdom who were not in full time education and were not working or on Government-supported training schemes for the three months ending each November from 1997 to 2003.

As with any statistical sample survey, estimates from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) are subject to sampling variability.

People aged 16–18, United Kingdom, three months ending each November from 1997 to 2003

Thousand

	People aged 16–18	*People aged 16–18 who are not in full-time education, not working or on Government training schemes*
1997	2,130	230
1998	2,124	243
1999	2,107	239
2000	2,114	238
2001	2,195	263
2002	2,253	288
2003	2,290	304

Source:
ONS-Labour Force Survey

Accounting Officers

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on how many occasions since 1 July 2003 he has been informed of a Minister issuing a direction to an

accounting officer as set out in paragraphs 14 to 17 of the Treasury document, The responsibilities of an accounting officer; on which grounds the note of dissent was issued; and if he will make a statement. [177235]

Ruth Kelly: The Treasury has not been informed of any directions issued by Ministers to Accounting Officers under this guidance, since the reply I gave the hon. Member on 5 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1211W.

African Debt

John Barrett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much is owed to the UK in bilateral debt by countries in Africa, broken down by country. [177418]

John Healey: Most of the debt owed to the UK Government by other sovereign Governments arises from defaults on export contracts guaranteed by the Export Credits Guarantee Department (ECGD). These debts usually become the subject of Bilateral Debt Agreements entered into under the auspices of the Paris Club of official creditors. The following table shows the debt owed to the UK Government as at 30 September 2003 under Paris Club Arrangements.

The UK Government have already announced their commitment to providing 100 per cent. irrevocable debt relief for all countries eligible for the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative on their reaching Completion Point. In addition, for eligible HIPC countries yet to reach Decision Point, the UK does not ask for, or expect to receive, payments. Any debt payments that are made are held in trust until they can be returned to fund poverty reduction.

The debts of Benin, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda were all cancelled when they reached the HIPC Completion Point.

Total amounts outstanding[1] held by African countries on Paris Club Agreements as at 30 September 2003

	Total owed (£ million)
Algeria	145.1
Angola	130.4
Cameroon[2]	64.1
Central African Republic[3]	0.4
Congo[3]	159.8
Cote d'Ivoire[3]	18.9
Democratic Republic of Congo[2]	75.3
Egypt	151.9
Ethiopia[4]	11.8
Gabon	139.8
Ghana[2]	27.7
Guinea[2]	3.9
Kenya[5]	18.9
Liberia[3]	20.6
Madagascar[2]	27.2
Malawi[2]	0.4
Morocco	25.3
Niger[4]	8.2
Nigeria	4,905.1
Senegal[4]	1.4
Sierra Leone[2]	3.5
Somalia[3]	31.9
Sudan[3]	580.8
Togo[3]	19.4
Zambia[2]	174.4

Total amounts outstanding[1] held by African countries on Paris Club Agreements as at 30 September 2003

	Total owed (£ million)
Total	6,746.2

[1] Includes principal outstanding plus any arrears.
[2] At Decision Point of the HIPC Initiative.
[3] Eligible for the HIPC Initiative, but not yet at Decision Point.
[4] Graduated from the HIPC Initiative and had all debt irrevocably written off since end-September 2003.
[5] Eligible for HIPC Initiative but currently deemed sustainable without HIPC treatment.

Business Premise Renovation Allowance

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much was claimed in Business Premise Renovation Allowance in each qualifying ward in Wales, listed in descending order. [177350]

Dawn Primarolo: As announced by the Chancellor in Budget 2004, the proposed Business Premises Renovation Allowance scheme will be introduced in 2005, subject to state aid approval.

Child Benefit

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people within Tamworth constituency receive child benefit *(a)* through an Order Book, *(b)* through a Post Office Card Account and *(c)* paid directly into a bank or building society account. [176905]

Dawn Primarolo: Nationally, about 15 per cent. of child benefit (CB) recipients were being paid by Order Books at mid-May 2004, although arrangements are in place for some of these to move to direct payment when their books run out. About 5 per cent. of CB recipients have supplied Post Office Card Account details to Inland Revenue for payment.

Separate figures are not available for each constituency. There were an estimated 12,000 child benefit recipients in the Tamworth constituency at November 2003.

Customs and Excise

Mr. Paice: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many staff from Customs and Excise were employed at UK seaports and airports in each of the last five years. [177175]

John Healey: Statistics on the number of HM Customs and Excise staff employed at UK seaports and airports are not held centrally. Staff are increasingly formed into mobile teams working at seaports, airports and inland locations according to risk in order to improve the impact of their activity.

Departmental Administration Budgets

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what progress has been made towards the 5 per cent. reduction in real terms in his Department's administration budget by 2008 which he announced in the House on 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 331. [176513]

Mr. Boateng: HM Treasury's Spending Review 2004 settlement, agreed at the time of the Budget, fixes the Department's administration budget in cash terms at the 2005–06 level through to 2007–08. At forecast rates of inflation, that represents a real terms reduction of more than 5 per cent. There will be further announcements in the Spending Review.

Gift Aid

John Barrett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many responses he has received to the consultation he announced in the 2004 Budget on ending the entitlement of charities to claim gift aid on day memberships; and what percentage this represents of the number of organisations written to about this consultation. [177417]

John Healey: The Inland Revenue has written to 118 organisations—of which 84 are charities and 34 are representative bodies. A copy of this letter has been placed on the Inland Revenue website. At 8 June the Inland Revenue had received 14 written responses, representing almost 12 per cent. of those written to. Charities and representative bodies have until 11 June to respond.

Officials and I have also held a series of constructive meetings with sector representatives and we will report this outcome of the consultation in due course.

Home Computer Initiative

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* employers and *(b)* employees have taken part in the Home Computer Initiative in each year since its inception. [176985]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Lady to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Eddisbury (Mr. O'Brien), on 27 February 2004, *Official Report*, columns 591–92W.

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to promote the Home Computer Initiative (HCI) within the public sector; and whether he plans to offer the HCI to civil servants. [176986]

Dawn Primarolo: The Head of the Home Civil Service has written to the Heads of Civil Service departments to inform them of the initiative and to encourage them to adopt computer loan schemes within their departments.

Income Tax

Mr. Battle: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many senior citizens in *(a)* Leeds metropolitan district council and *(b)* Leeds, West constituency have qualified for the 10p rate of income tax in each year since its introduction. [176982]

Dawn Primarolo: The requested information is given in the following table.

Number of pensioners taxpayers

Thousand

	2000–01	*2001–02*
(a) Leeds Metropolitan District	47	51
(b) Leeds West Constituency	—	4

All income taxpayers benefit from the 10p starting rate. In the Survey of Personal Incomes the sample size of pensioners living in Leeds, West constituency is relatively small compared to other constituencies so a reliable estimate cannot be given for 2000–01. All estimates should be treated with caution because of sampling variation. Estimates are based on the 2000–01 and 2001–02 Survey of Personal Incomes. Figures for 1999–2000 are currently not available.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate how many pensioners in Greater London paid income tax at the *(a)* higher rate and *(b)* basic rate in each year since 1996–97; and what percentage of all (i) pensioner taxpayers and (ii) pensioners the figures represent in each case. [177046]

Dawn Primarolo: Estimates are in the following tables.

(a) Higher rate pensioner[1] taxpayers in London boroughs

Number: Thousan

	Number	*Percentage of London pensioner taxpayers (i)[2]*	*Percentage of London pensioner taxpayers (ii)[2]*
1996–97	27	7	3
1997–98	29	7	3
1998–99	33	6	3
2000–01	36	7	3
2001–02	33	7	3

(b) Basic rate pensioner[1] taxpayers in London boroughs

Number: Thousand

	Number	*Percentage of London pensioner taxpayers (i)[2]*	*Percentage of London pensioner taxpayers (ii)[2]*
1996–97[3]	165	40	15
1997–98[3]	210	49	20
1998–99[3]	246	47	23
2000–01[4]	371	74	36
2001–02[4]	358	74	35

[1] Men aged 65 and over and women aged 60 and over.

[2] Mid-year population estimates supplied by the Office of National Statistics.

[3] From 1993–94 until 1998–99 the figures in the table do not include a number of taxpayers with taxable income in excess of the lower rate limit who only paid tax at the lower rate, not the basic rate. This was because only their dividend income and (from 1996–97) savings income took their taxable income above the lower rate limit. As such, this income was chargeable to tax at the lower rate and not the basic rate.

[4] In 1999–2000 the starting rate replaced the lower rate. In 1998–99 the 20 per cent. lower rate band was £4,300. In 1999–2000 the 10 per cent. starting rate band was £1,500. Some taxpayers who were paying at the lower rate of income tax started paying at the basic rate.

Estimates should be treated with caution because of sampling variation. The estimates are based on the Survey of Personal Incomes. Figures for 1999–2000 are currently not available.

Virginia Bottomley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate how many and what proportion of pensioners in *(a)* South West Surrey constituency and *(b)* Surrey paid income tax at (i) higher rate and (ii) basic rate in each year since 1996–97. [177266]

Dawn Primarolo: Estimates are in the following tables.

(b) Higher rate pensioner[1] taxpayers in Surrey

	Number: Thousand	
	Number(i)	*Percentage of all Surrey pensioners(i)[2]*
1996–97	8	4
1997–98	9	5
1998–99	13	7
2000–01	12	6
2001–02	12	6

(b) Basic rate pensioner[1] taxpayers in Surrey

	Number: Thousand	
	Number(ii)	*Percentage of all Surrey pensioners(ii)[2]*
1996–97[3,5]	—	—
1997–98[3]	61	31
1998–99[3]	67	34
2000–01[4]	88	44
2001–02[4]	80	40

[1] Men aged 65 and over and women aged 60 and over.

[2] Mid-year population estimates supplied by the Office of National Statistics.

[3] From 1993–94 until 1998–99 the figures in the table do not include a number of taxpayers with taxable income in excess of the lower rate limit who only paid tax at the lower rate, not the basic rate. This was because only their dividend income and (from 1996–97) savings income took their taxable income above the lower rate limit. As such, this income was chargeable to tax at the lower rate and not the basic rate.

[4] In 1999–2000 the starting rate replaced the lower rate. In 1998–99 the 20 per cent. lower rate band was £4,300. In 1999–2000 the 10 per cent. starting rate band was £1,500. Some taxpayers who were paying at the lower rate of income tax started paying at the basic rate.

[5] In the Survey of Personal Incomes the sample size of pensioners living in Surrey is relatively small compared to other geographical areas so a reliable estimate cannot be given for 1996–97.

In the Survey of Personal Incomes the sample size of pensioner taxpayers living in the South West Surrey constituency is relatively small compared to other geographical areas so reliable estimates cannot be given. Estimates should be treated with caution because of sampling variation. The estimates are based on the Survey of Personal Incomes. Figures for 1999–2000 are currently not available.

Inflows/Outflows

Mr. Alan Duncan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list *(a)* total inflow to the UK, *(b)* total outflow from the UK and *(c)* new inflow into the UK in each year since 1979. [177095]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Alan Duncan, dated 8 June 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your question regarding estimates of international migration to and from the United Kingdom, plus net migration, since 1979. (177095)

These estimates are shown in the attached table.

International migration, time series 1979 to 2002, United Kingdom

Thousand

	Inflow	*Outflow*	*Balance*
1979	194.8	188.5	6.2
1980	173.4	228.4	-55.0
1981	152.8	232.3	-79.5
1982	201.0	257.3	-56.2
1983	201.6	184.2	17.4
1984	200.9	163.5	37.4
1985	232.1	173.7	58.4
1986	250.3	213.1	37.2
1987	211.4	209.1	2.2
1988	216.0	237.2	-21.3
1989	249.8	205.4	44.3
1990	266.8	230.8	36.0
1991	328.4	285.0	43.5
1992	267.6	281.1	-13.5
1993	265.1	266.3	-1.2
1994	314.4	237.6	76.8
1995	311.9	236.5	75.4
1996	317.8	263.7	54.1
1997	326.1	279.2	46.8
1998	390.3	251.5	138.8
1999	453.8	290.8	163.0
2000	483.4	320.7	162.8
2001	479.6	307.7	171.8
2002	512.8	359.4	153.4

Notes:

1. Data tor 1979–90 are based on the international Passenger Survey (IPS) only. Data for 1991–2002 are based mainly on data from the IPS but also include adjustments for (1) those whose intended length of stay changes so that their migrant status changes; (2) asylum seekers and their dependants not covered by the IPS; and (3) flows between the UK and the Republic of Ireland. This means that figures for years from 1991 onwards include all categories of migrants and therefore represent total international migration, while figures for years Drier to 1991 exclude certain categories.

2. The estimates for years from 1991 onwards are compiled using the following main sources of migration data in addition to the IPS: Home Office data on asylum seekers and their dependants, and people who entered the UK as short-term visitors but were subsequently granted an extension of stay for a year or longer for other reasons, for example, as students or on the basis of marriage; and estimates of migration between the UK and the Irish Republic.

Inland Revenue

Mr. Flook: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much compensation has been paid out by the Inland Revenue to accountants and other professional advisers following the admission of blame for errors in each of the last three years. [177192]

Dawn Primarolo: The Inland Revenue does not pay compensation to accountants and other professional advisers. In accordance with its Code of Practice 1 "Putting things right" the Inland Revenue reimburses customers for additional professional fees paid as a direct result of Inland Revenue errors.

The total amount of compensation paid to customers, including reimbursement of professional fees, for each of the last three years is as follows:

Year ending 31 March	£ million
2004	2.43
2003	2.28
2002	2.57

Mr. Flook: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many of the late filings penalty notices for financial year 2002–03 were incorrectly issued because of a logging error by the Inland Revenue. [177196]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* The information requested is not available.

Migrants

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the number of *(a)* migrants in the UK and *(b)* dependant children of migrants aged under 16 years who were born (i) in and (ii) outside the UK. [177445]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Julian Brazier, dated 8 June 2004:

As National Statistician and Registrar General for England and Wales, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking what estimate has been made of the number of *(a)* migrants in the UK and *(b)* dependent children of migrants aged under 16 years who were born (i) in and (ii) outside the UK. (177445)

For the purposes of this question, a 'migrant' is taken to be a person resident in the UK who was born in another country. The 2001 Census estimated that 4,643,086 residents of England and Wales were born outside the UK: this represents 8.9 per cent. of the total population of England and Wales. The figure can be derived from table KS05 in the "Census 2001 Key Statistics for local authorities in England and Wales" report which is available in the House of Commons Library.

Information on the country of birth of the dependent children of such 'migrants' is currently unavailable. However, you may wish to note that the Census recorded a total of 11,665,266 dependent children in England and Wales, of which 430,623 were born outside the UK. These figures are provided in table T12 in the "Census 2001 National report for England and Wales", which is also available in the House of Commons Library.

The above figures for people born outside the UK will include people born in the Republic of Ireland and some UK citizens who happen to be born outside the UK, such as children born to Armed Forces personnel when the family was stationed overseas.

Mr. Alan Duncan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the net non-EU migration to the UK in each year since 1979. [177089]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Alan Duncan, dated 8 June 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your question regarding estimates of net non-European Union migration to the United Kingdom since 1979. (177089)

These estimates are shown in the attached table. The phrase "non-European Union migration" has been interpreted as referring to the citizenship of migrants as opposed to, for example, their country of birth or country of last residence.

Please note that the definition for the European Union does not include the ten states that joined on 1 May 2004, nor does it include the non—EU states in the European Economic Area. The countries included are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

International migration of people who are not citizens of EU countries, time series 1979 to 2002, United Kingdom

Thousand

	Inflow	Outflow	Balance
1979	98.7	49.5	49.2
1980	88.9	57.2	31.7
1981	81.0	53.0	28.0
1982	85.8	59.8	25.9
1983	92.3	50.5	41.7
1984	86.1	51.3	34.8
1985	98.4	52.5	45.9
1986	94.2	68.2	26.0
1987	87.8	58.0	29.8
1988	99.3	70.3	28.9
1989	114.2	61.2	53.0
1990	123.7	65.2	58.6
1991	166.5	77.5	89.0
1992	131.4	87.6	43.9
1993	135.0	77.3	57.7
1994	155.8	70.9	84.9
1995	166.8	63.0	103.8
1996	151.7	64.0	87.7
1997	165.6	77.4	88.2
1998	205.4	76.9	128.6
1999	270.8	93.0	177.8
2000	316.2	102.6	213.6
2001	312.9	99.4	213.5
2002	355.4	122.0	233.4

Notes:

1. Data for 1979–90 are based on the International Passenger Survey (IPS) only. Data for 1991–2002 are based mainly on data from the IPS but also include adjustments for (1) those whose intended length of stay changes so that their migrant status changes; (2) asylum seekers and their dependants not covered by the IPS; and (3) flows between the UK and the Republic of Ireland. This means that figures for years from 1991 onwards include all categories of migrants and therefore represent total international migration, while figures for years prior to 1991 exclude certain categories of migration.

2. The estimates for years from 1991 onwards are compiled using the following main sources of migration data in addition to the IPS: Home Office data on asylum seekers and their dependants, and people who entered the UK as short-term visitors but were subsequently granted an extension of stay for a year or longer for other reasons, for example, as students or on the basis of marriage; and estimates of migration between the UK and the Irish Republic.

Registrar Records

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what back-up systems are in place for the records held on computers by registrars of births, marriages and deaths; and if he will make a statement; [177002]

(2) what measures are taken against possible abuse of records held by registrars of births, marriages and deaths; and if he will make a statement. [177003]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the Registrar General for England and Wales, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Laurence Robertson, dated 8 June 2004:

As National Statistician and Registrar General for England and Wales, I have been asked to reply to your recent questions concerning what back-up exists for the records held on computers by registrars of births, marriages and deaths and what measures are taken against possible abuse of records held by registrars of births, marriages and deaths. (177002,177003)

Every birth, death and marriage in England and Wales is registered locally in a register book. The Registrar General maintains a central archive of each registration created from paper certified copies of the original record. The certified copies are microfilmed to enable certificates to be issued by the General Register Office. The register entries and the central archive are the legal records of the event.

Since the early 1990's part of the registration process has been computerised to facilitate the collection of the information and the local printing of certificates. The computer records are backed up locally and copies are sent weekly to the Registrar General.

The information to be recorded by registrars of births, deaths and marriages is set out in statute and entered into a bound register book. Registers are kept locally in a secure fireproof store. In order to maintain the integrity of the records a register entry may be amended only by an authorised official and by the means set out in statute. The Registrar General maintains a central archive of all registrations made and any amendment made locally has to be duplicated in the central archive.

Tax Credits

Mr. Flight: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total expenditure on advertisements for tax credits has been since their inception. [176230]

Dawn Primarolo: Advertising expenditure on tax credits was £12.5 million in 2002–03 and £11.4 million in 2003–04.

For earlier years, I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Truro and St. Austell (Matthew Taylor) on 13 June 2002, *Official Report*, column 1397W.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what he estimates to be the costs of administering the *(a)* children's tax credit, *(b)* child tax credit, *(c)* working families tax credit, *(d)* working tax credit and *(e)* family credit in each year since 1997–98; and what his projected expenditure on administration costs for each credit is in each future year for which figures are available. [177489]

Dawn Primarolo: The costs of managing and paying working families and disabled person's tax credits are shown in the Inland Revenue Trust Accounts, at Note 3 for 1999–2000 to 2001–02 and at Note 4 for 2002–03. A broad estimate of the annual cost of administering the child and working tax credits appears in the Regulatory Impact Assessment, published on 15 July 2002. The actual cost in 2003–04 will appear in the Trust Account for that year.

I understand from the Department of Work and Pensions that the estimated annual costs for family credit in Great Britain are given in the Annual Reports of the former Department of Social Security. The administration of the children's tax credit for 2001–02 and 2002–03 was part of the Inland Revenue's routine work and was not separately identified in running costs.

Transport Emissions

Virginia Bottomley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what rules and guidelines cover the recent modifications to the Office of National Statistics report on emissions and the information added on the website relating to aviation and road freight emissions. [177267]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mrs. Virginia Bottomley, dated 8 June 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your parliamentary question on modifications to the ONS Environmental Accounts report. (177267)

The information on greenhouse gas emissions from transport were not removed from the ONS Environmental Accounts report published on 20 May 2004. The report was never altered from the version originally prepared by professional statisticians within ONS, and is publicly available on the National Statistics website.

The focus of the accompanying News Release changed during drafting, as there were some unresolved statistical concerns over the reconciliation of road freight emissions figures using alternative definitions. Given these concerns, it was decided that it would not be appropriate for the News Release to focus upon transport emissions as had been intended. This decision was taken independently by senior Government statisticians, as a matter of professional judgement.

The circumstances surrounding this decision are explained in a letter that I sent to David Rowlands (Permanent Secretary of the Department for Transport) on 28 May. This letter is available on the website of the Statistics Commission at: http://www.statscom.org.uk/media_pdfs/correspondence/letter0189.pdf

The ONS operates in accordance with the "Framework for National Statistics" and follows the principles and procedures set out in the "National Statistics Code of Practice" and its supporting "Protocols". One of the key principles within the "Code of Practice" states that National Statistics will be "fit for purpose and of high quality". Our concerns about the reconciliation of the emissions data led us to make the professional judgement that these measures, while of publishable quality, were not fit for the purpose of being the focus of a high-profile news release.

"The Framework for National Statistics" also states that National Statistics must "be produced and presented without political interference". The Environmental Accounts report was produced and released fully in accordance with this principle.

Travellers

Andrew Selous: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 24 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1461–62W, on travellers, what assessment of the risk of non-compliance in relation to the payment of income tax and VAT has been made in respect of unauthorised traveller developments in *(a)* England and Wales and *(b)* South Bedfordshire. [176835]

John Healey: Risk assessment is not carried out by demographic or socio-economic group. Therefore, no specific assessment of the risk of non-compliance in relation to the payment of VAT or income tax has been made in respect of unauthorised traveller developments.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

British Coal Staff Superannuation Scheme

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the transfer of pension rights and benefits under TUPE for members of the British Coal Staff Superannuation Scheme into the Industry Wide Coal Staff Superannuation Scheme complied fully with Article 3 of the EU Acquired Rights Directive; and if she will make a statement. [176636]

Nigel Griffiths: I am advised that, in accordance with Article 3 of the EU Acquired Rights Directive occupational pension rights—specifically old age, invalidity or survivors' benefits—are excluded from the operation of TUPE.

However, recent rulings by the European Court of Justice may have implications on whether early retirement benefits on redundancy are excluded from TUPE protection. Interpreting the ECJ ruling in relation to British Coal Staff Superannuation Scheme (BCSSS) members and their current employers is a matter for the Pensions Ombudsman and the courts.

The Government already funds the early retirement benefits on redundancy for members of the BCSSS.

Business Support

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many businesses were helped by each Business Link operator in *(a)* Greater London and *(b)* each London borough in 2001–02 [177127]

Nigel Griffiths: In 2001–02 there was one Business Link Operator in London, Business Link for London. In 2001–02 14,980 business were assisted.

The breakdown in boroughs is approximately as follows:

	Number
Camden	440
Islington	544
Kensington and Chelsea	216
Lambeth	240
Southwark	365
Wandsworth	334
Westminster	733
Barking and Dagenham	63
Bexley	133
City of London	287
Greenwich	185
Hackney	331
Havering	159
Lewisham	231
Newham	298
Redbridge	215
Tower Hamlets	365
Barnet	277
Enfield	344
Haringey	332
Waltham Forest	237
Bromley	225
Croydon	378
Kingston upon Thames	188
Merton	169
Richmond upon Thames	257
Sutton	125
Brent	212
Ealing	372
Hammersmith and Fulham	261
Harrow	192
Hillingdon	174
Hounslow	220
Not allocated to borough	5,877

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many small businesses in Greater London increased their net profit above £15,000 in each year since 1997; and what the percentage change was in each year. [177129]

Nigel Griffiths: I regret that this information is not available.

Coal Health Claims

Paddy Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much had been paid *(a)* in total and *(b)* in Nottinghamshire for coal health claims for (i) chronic bronchitis and emphysema and (ii) vibration white finger at 31 March. [176546]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* To date the figures are:

	COPD (£ billion)	*VWF (£ million)*
Total amount paid to claimants	1.1	972.4
Total amount paid to claimants in [1]Nottinghamshire/Derbyshire/ Leicestershire	56.1	123.5

[1] Figures for Nottinghamshire are not available separately.

Regional and constituency figures can be found on the Department's website: www.dti.gov.uk/coalhealth. The information is complied in the middle of the month and shows the figures for the end of the previous month.

IT Equipment

Mr. Flight: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how often since 1997 *(a)* her Department and *(b)* its associated public sector organisations have undergone portable appliance testing of IT equipment; and what the cost was of portable appliance testing in each year since 1997. [174982]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) has since 1997 undertaken annual testing of all portable appliances in DTI offices, including IT equipment, usually through its operations and maintenance contract. The cost of portable appliance testing is included in the overall price of the contract and cannot be provided separately.

In respect of the DTI's executive agencies, each Chief Executive has been asked to reply.

Letter from Claire Clancy to Mr. Howard Flight, dated 8 June 2004:

I am responding to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on behalf of Companies House, which is an Executive Agency of the DTI.

The Portable Appliance Testing of IT equipment at Companies House is carried out every three to five years in accordance with the IEE recommendations. The cost is approximately £5000.00 per annum.

Letter from Desmond Flynn to Mr. Howard Flight, dated 8 June 2004:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply to you directly on behalf of The Insolvency Service in respect of your question (2003/3109) asking how often since 1997 *(a)* the Department *(b)* its associated public sector organisation have undergone portable appliance testing of IT equipment and what the cost was of portable appliance testing in each year since 1997.

Since 1997, The Insolvency Service has undertaken annual testing of all portable appliances in our office, including IT equipment, usually using contactors from OGC 'Buying Solutions' call-off arrangements. The Service do not have the separate costs available for such testing as this is included with other maintenance costs.

Letter from Ron Marchant to Mr. Howard Flight, dated 8 June 2004:

Since 1997 the Patent Office has undertaken annual testing of all portable appliances in our offices, including I.T. equipment.

Our appointed mechanical and electrical contractors undertake this work for us and these costs are included in our overall building maintenance contract.

Letter from Roger Heathcote to Mr. Howard Flight, dated 8 June 2004:

You asked the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, how often since 1997 her Department and its associated public sector organisations have undergone portable testing of IT equipment and what the cost was of portable appliance testing in each year since 1997. I have been asked to reply on behalf of the Employment Tribunals Service (ETS).

Portable Appliance Testing is undertaken on a two yearly cycle within ETS as part of a planned programme of maintenance which includes the testing of IT equipment. I regret that I am unable to identify the separate costs within this associated with the testing of IT equipment.

Marketing

Mr. Martlew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the Innovation Review, what research the Government have carried out into customer value and brand reputation marketing; and if she will make a statement. [176417]

Mr. Sutcliffe: At the start of the innovation review, DTI collated the available evidence on the drivers of innovation, the UK's innovation performance and the factors that help explain it. The evidence paper can be found at www.dti.gov.uk/economics/economicspaper7.pdf. DTI funding is also supporting the projects on the measurement and management of intangibles assets. One ongoing project under this theme is "Facilitating Innovation through the Measurement and Management of Intangibles". This study focuses on the contribution, which 'intangible'assets (including brands and customer networks) make to processes of innovation. Further information can be found on the website at: www.ebkresearch.org/index.htm

Mr. Martlew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what plans she has to carry out further research in the areas of brand reputation, customer value and marketing and their role in the innovation process; [176446]

(2) pursuant to the Innovation Review, what plans the Government have to help companies make more effective use of marketing and branding as a means of delivering successful innovation and increasing customer satisfaction. [176448]

Nigel Griffiths: Support for the development of marketing skills falls within the new "Achieving Best Practice in your Business" theme that promotes the new best practice products produced from the Business Support review. For example, the information and advice product has a suite of literature aimed at promoting E-marketing. On the support side, we aim to support 9,000 benchmark diagnostics and up to 2,000 best practice projects, many of which will have marketing/branding aspects.

Research and Development

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what the planned regional competition deadlines are for the grant for research and development over the next 28 months; and if she will make a statement; [174711]

(2) what funds have been allocated for the grant for research and development between 2004 and 2007; and if she will make a statement. [174712]

Nigel Griffiths: Overall spend on programmes to improve UK innovation performance and accelerate business exploitation of science and technologies is planned to increase from £377 million in 2004–05 to over £387 million in 2005–06.

Following a review of the Department's business support Grant for Research and Development was introduced on 1 June 2003 to replace and enhance the Smart scheme. It has proved just as popular as its predecessor so regional competitions for the grants have been introduced to ensure that expenditure on the product remains under control and to ensure that those research and development projects which best meet the grant selection criteria are supported.

The first regional competition deadline for Grant for Research and Development was 28 May. The dates of further competitions are yet to be decided.

The Department is planning to spend £36 million on Grant for Research and Development and its predecessor, Smart, in the financial year 2004–05 and £26 million in 2005–06. Plans for subsequent years will be agreed as part of the 2004 Spending Review process.

Small Businesses

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government have taken to help small businesses in Bootle since 1997. [176527]

Nigel Griffiths: The Business Link Operator for Merseyside, Greater Merseyside Enterprises (GME), has provided assistance to 713 enterprises in the Bootle constituency since 2001. The Small Business Service was set up as an agency of the Department of Trade and Industry in April 2000. Contracts were exchanged with a national network of 45 Business Link Operators (seven in the North West) to provide business support to small and medium-sized enterprises from April 2001. Before this date, Government support to business was provided through training and enterprise councils and the SBS does not have access to these data.

85 of the 713 companies received business start-up advice, other assistance provided included: workforce development, financial advice, Investors In People, specialist business advice, international trade, and marketing assistance.

29 of the companies were female-run businesses and 39 were ethnic-run businesses.

Under the Enterprise Grant scheme, 11 companies have received offers of grant with a total value of £333,380 since 1997.

Under the Research and Development scheme, 12 companies have received offers of grant with a total value of £678,044 since 1997.

Social Chapter

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the effects of the EU Social Chapter on the residents of Bootle. [177000]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The residents of Bootle have benefited from the EU Social Chapter by having their employment rights extended to include:

the right to parental leave, which gives parents the right to 13 weeks unpaid leave at the birth or adoption of a child;

the entitlement of part-time workers to the same pro-rate terms and conditions of employment as full-time workers, thereby removing any discrimination and improving the quality of part-time jobs;

the provision that once a prima facie case has been made in an employment tribunal claim, the burden of proof is placed on the defendant (usually the employer), who will need to demonstrate that sex discrimination has not occurred;

rights under the Fixed Term Work Directive that provide for the fair treatment of fixed term workers and prevent abuse of fixed term contracts; and

rights under the European Works Council Directive, which requires companies with at least 1,000 employees in total and at least 150 workers in each of the two member states, to establish structures for consulting workers on issues that affect them.

In addition, the Information and Consultation of Employees Directive to be implemented in the UK by March 2005, establishes a right to new minimum standards for workforce communication and involvement in large firms.

Wind Farms

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the visual impact of wind farms in operation; and if she will make a statement. [175000]

Mr. Timms: The visual impact of proposed wind farm developments is considered on a case-by-case basis by the relevant planning authorities.

The Government's national planning policy with regard to wind farms and renewable energy is set out in Planning Policy Guidance note (PPG) 22: Renewable Energy, which gives local planning authorities guidance on a range of issues that affect the siting of wind turbines—including visual impact.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the composition was of the working group responsible for the ETSU-R-97 report entitled the Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms. [175562]

Mr. Timms: The working group responsible for the ETSU-R-97 report entitled the Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms was:

Name	
Mr. R. Meir—Chairman	DTI
Dr. M. L. Legerton—Secretary	ETSU
Dr. M. B. Anderson	Renewable Energy Systems
Mr. B. Berry	National Physical Laboratory
Dr. A. Bullmore	Hoare Lea and Partners
Mr. M. Hayes	The Hayes McKenzie Partnership
Mr. M. Jiggins	Carrick District Council
Mr. E. Leeming	The National Power Company Ltd.
Dr. P. Musgrove	National Wind Power Ltd.
Mr. D. J. Spode	North Cornwall District Council
Mr. H. A. Thomas	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Ms E. Tomalin	EcoGen Ltd.
Mr. M. Trinick	Bond Pearce Solicitors
Dr. J. Warren	National Wind Power Ltd.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 9 June 2004

HEALTH

Abortions

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many abortions were carried out *(a)* in NHS facilities and *(b)* in private facilities on residents of South Gloucestershire in the most recent year for which figures are available. [176391]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* Information about abortions carried out in national health service and private facilities by primary care trust in 2002 can be found in Table 14 of Abortion Statistics, England and Wales: 2002 which can be found at www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public/sb0323.htm. A copy of the bulletin has been placed in the Library.

"NHS agency" abortions are those performed in the independent sector under NHS contract.

Cancer

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of women in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood with suspected breast cancer saw a specialist within two weeks in each of the last five years. [175329]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The number and percentage of women with suspected breast cancer who saw a specialist at national health service organisations serving the Blackpool, North and Fleetwood constituency within two weeks is shown in the table.

Waiting times for 1st consultant out-patient appointment for suspected breast cancer following urgent GP referral

	NHS Trust	Seen within two weeks	
		Percentage	Number
1999–2000	Blackpool Victoria Hospital NHS Trust	75.8	25
1999–2000	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	94.0	63
2000–01	Blackpool Victoria Hospital NHS Trust	99.1	111
2000–01	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	100.0	184
2001–02	Blackpool Victoria Hospital NHS Trust	100.0	236
2001–02	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	100.0	196
2002–03	Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	228
2002–03	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	214
2003–04	Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	278
2003–04	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	279

Notes:
1. Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust was formed following the merger of Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust and Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust.
2. Data for 2003–04 are up to Quarter 3.

Source:
Department of Health form QMCW.

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of patients with suspected cancer in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood saw an NHS consultant within two weeks in each of the last seven years. [175335]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The number and percentage of patients with suspected cancer at national health service organisations serving the Blackpool, North and Fleetwood constituency who saw a NHS consultant within two weeks in each of the last seven years is shown in the table.

Waiting times for first consultant out-patient appointment for suspected cancer following urgent GP referral

	NHS trust	Seen within two weeks	
		Percentage	Number
2000–01	Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services	100.0	95
2000–01	Blackpool Victoria Hospital NHS Trust	100.0	324
2000–01	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	100.0	320
2000–01	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	158
2001–02	Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services	100.0	149
2001–02	Blackpool Victoria Hospital NHS Trust	100.0	803
2001–02	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	100.0	406
2001–02	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	291
2002–03	Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	1,084
2002–03	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	783
2003–04	Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	1,217
2003–04	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	990

Notes:
1. Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust was formed following the merger of Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust and Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust.
2. Data for 2003–04 are up to Quarter 3.

Source:
Department of Health form QMCW.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of women in Manchester, Gorton with suspected breast cancer saw a specialist within two weeks in each of the last five years. [167379]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust—Waiting times

Year	Quarter	NHS Trust	Seen within two weeks	
			Percentage	Number
1999–2000	1	South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	19.6	21
1999–2000	2	South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	41.4	48

South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust—Waiting times

Year	Quarter	NHS Trust	Seen within two weeks: Percentage	Seen within two weeks: Number
1999–2000	3	South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	96.7	118
1999–2000	4	South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	116
2000–01	1	South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	137
2000–01	2	South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	98.6	137
2000–01	3	South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	99.1	105
2000–01	4	South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	126
2001–02	1	South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	95.0	134
2001–02	2	South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	98.9	182
2001–02	3	South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	99.0	195
2001–02	4	South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	91.3	168
2002–03	1	South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	93.5	129
2002–03	2	South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	98.5	193
2002–03	3	South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	268
2002–03	4	South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	195
2003–04	1	South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	99.0	200
2003–04	2	South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	99.1	215
2003–04	3	South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	223
2003–04	4	South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	100.0	202

Source:
Department of Health form QMCW.

Mr. Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of patients with suspected cancer in Manchester, Blackley saw an NHS consultant within two weeks in each of the last seven years. [175012]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested. The table shows how many and the percentage of suspected cancer patients, seen within two weeks of urgent referral by a general practitioner, both at Christie Hospital National Health Service Trust and at the Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust and its predecessor organisations for each quarter since quarter 1999–2000. Earlier figures are not available.

Waiting times for first consultant outpatient appointment for suspected cancer following urgent GP referral—Christie Hospital NHS Trust

	Quarter	NHS Trust	Seen within two weeks: Percentage	Seen within two weeks: Number
2000–01	4	Christie Hospital NHS Trust	95.0	19
2001–02	1	Christie Hospital NHS Trust	83.3	5
	2	Christie Hospital NHS Trust	100.0	8
	3	Christie Hospital NHS Trust	100.0	3
	4	Christie Hospital NHS Trust	100.0	3
2002–03	1	Christie Hospital NHS Trust	83.3	5
	2	Christie Hospital NHS Trust	100.0	2
	3	Christie Hospital NHS Trust	85.7	6
	4	Christie Hospital NHS Trust	80.0	4
2003–04	1	Christie Hospital NHS Trust	75.0	3
	2	Christie Hospital NHS Trust	100.0	5
	3	Christie Hospital NHS Trust	100.0	3

Source:
DH form QMCW

Waiting times for first consultant outpatient appointment for suspected cancer following urgent GP referral—Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust and predecessor NHS trusts

	Quarter	NHS Trust	Seen within two weeks: Percentage	Seen within two weeks: Number
2000–01	4	Oldham NHS Trust	93.3	167
	4	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	99.0	200
	4	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	93.9	200
	4	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	97.1	374
2001–02	1	Oldham NHS Trust	94.80	181
	1	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	97.80	224
	1	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	94.90	242
	1	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	96.10	345
	2	Oldham NHS Trust	96.40	162
	2	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	93.00	227
	2	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	90.60	298
	2	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	99.00	383
	3	Oldham NHS Trust	98.90	181
	3	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	99.60	235
	3	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	94.70	286
	3	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	99.50	398
	4	Oldham NHS Trust	98.50	197
	4	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	99.50	209
	4	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	99.70	302
	4	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	100.00	450
2002–03	1	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	98.80	1,215
	2	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	99.10	1,240
	3	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	98.40	1,325
	4	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	95.80	1,190
2003–04	1	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	92.20	1,214
	2	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	94.90	1,174
	3	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	97.60	1,276

Source:
DH form QMCW

Children (Common Conditions)

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the 10 most common conditions in children are. [173287]

Dr. Ladyman: Hospital episode statistics record reasons for hospital admission. The table shows the primary diagnosis for the 10 most common conditions, by broad classification, as cause of admission in the age range 0 to 16 years in 2002–03.

Primary diagnosis by ICD10 relevant diagnosis chapter headings—finished admission episodes by age breakdown 0–16 years.

	Condition	Number
Chapter X	Diseases of the respiratory system (JOO-J99)	179,357
Chapter XVI	Certain conditions originating in the perinatal period (POO-P96)	150,402
Chapter XIX	Injury, poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes (SOO-T98)	139,107
Chapter XI	Diseases of the digestive system (KOO-K93)	135,705
Chapter XVII	Congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities (QOO-Q99)	74,976
Chapter I	Certain infectious and parasitic diseases (AOO-B99)	72,213
Chapter II	Neoplasms (COO-D48)	53,782
Chapter VIII	Diseases of the ear and mastoid process (H60-H95)	47,994
Chapter XIV	Diseases of the genitourinary system (NOO-N99)	47,548
Chapter XIII	Diseases of the musculoskeletal system and connective tissue (MOO-M99)	30,091

Notes:
1. The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 (seven prior to 2002–03) diagnosis fields in the Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) data set and provides the main reason why the patient was in hospital.
2. A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
3. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).

Source:
Hospital episode statistics, Department of Health.

Dentists

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people are registered with an NHS dentist in Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care Trust. [173855]

Miss Melanie Johnson: 96,800 patients were registered with a general dental service dentist in the Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care Trust area on 31 March 2004.

Registrations lapse if patients do not return to their dentists within 15 months. Registration rates will exclude patients who have not been to their general dental service dentist within the past 15 months and patients who receive dental treatment from other national health service dental services.

Registrations are included in the area of the dentist. The registration rates for some areas may be affected by some patients receiving their dental treatment in a different area from the one in which they live.

NHS dental services are also provided by the community dental service, personal dental service, salaried service of the GDS and hospital dental service. These services do not require the patient to be registered with a dentist before treatment.

Dermatology

Mr. Keith Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients are on waiting lists for secondary dermatology treatment in the North West of England. [175054]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Diagnostic and Treatment Centres

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Health where the nearest diagnostic and treatment centre available for use by residents in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood is located. [175331]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There are two national health service treatment centres within the Liverpool area close to Blackpool and Fleetwood. One is at Clatterbridge, part of Wirral NHS Trust and the other is at Aintree, part of Aintree NHS Trust. Both opened in 2003 and provide care for orthopaedics and other mixed specialty patients.

Food Labelling

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps are being taken to introduce a system of food labelling which is more easily understood by consumers. [176403]

Miss Melanie Johnson: To help achieve clearer and more informative food labelling, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) has adopted an action plan on food labelling, tackling the issues identified by consumers as priority concerns. Progress on implementation of this plan is discussed regularly at open meetings hosted by the FSA.

Food Supplements Directive

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Public Health last met Consumers for Health Choice and other stakeholders to discuss their concerns about the Food Supplements Directive; what actions arose from that meeting; and what progress has subsequently been made in addressing the issues raised; [176534]

(2) when he next expects that the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Public Health will meet Consumers for Health Choice and other stakeholders to discuss interpretation and implementation in the UK of the Food Supplements Directive; [176535]

(3) when the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Public Health last met Commissioner Byrne to discuss the Food Supplements Directive; what was agreed at that meeting; and if he will make a statement. [176537]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave my hon. Friend the Member for Linlithgow (Mr. Dalyell) on 27 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1835W.

Free Eye Tests

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many senior citizens in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood have access to free eye tests. [175337]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data for the number of sight tests by constituency or by the number of senior citizens are not collected centrally.

The total number of sight tests paid for by Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority in the year 2002–03 for those aged 60 and over was 189,100. Sight tests cannot be equated to the number of patients.

GM Micro-organisms

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 10 May, *Official Report*, column 25, on GM micro-organisms, (1) whether a date has been set for the proposed Working Group of the Standing Committee to discuss issues relating to the labelling of products produced with genetically modified micro-organisms prior to the next Standing Committee in June; by whom the United Kingdom will be represented in those discussions; what specific policy objectives will be pursued in those discussions; and if he will make a statement; [177160]

(2) if he will list those organisations that responded to the recent consultation exercise undertaken by his Department and the Food Standards Agency in relation to the traceability and labelling regulations; what specific information has been *(a)* requested and *(b)* sought about the impact of the regulations on the fermentation industry and those of its products which are made with but do not contain genetically modified micro-organisms; and if he will make a statement;. [177162]

(3) whether his Department has *(a)* evaluated and *(b)* commented on the Statement of the Council and the Commission of 28 February 2003 in relation to the labelling of products made with but not containing genetically modified micro-organisms; [177163]

(4) whether he intends to make it his policy for the current discussions in Standing Committee that products produced with genetically modified micro-organisms, but which do not contain any GM material, should not need to be labelled under the provisions of the new traceability and labelling regulations;. [177161]

(5) what guidance he gives to industry about whether products made with but not containing genetically modified micro-organisms are within the scope of those elements of the new traceability and labelling regulations which require labelling of products as genetically modified; and if he will make a statement. [177164]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Commission has not set a date for the proposed genetic modification (GM) working group of the standing committee on the food chain and animal health and therefore no agenda or papers for the meeting are available yet.

The Government's position on GM labelling is that the relevant legislation should be practical, proportionate and enforceable. The Government will continue to maintain this position in discussions on the labelling of GM products, which fall within the scope of the European Commission GM food and feed regulation (No. 1829/2003).

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) consultation exercise on the new EC GM regulations will end on 25 June. Responses to the consultation will be made publicly available in due course. Comment on the impact of the regulations from all stakeholders, including the fermentation industry, has been requested to contribute to the regulatory impact assessment.

The Commission has indicated in a statement to the European Parliament dated 25 March 2003 that a decision on the labelling of products from genetically modified micro-organisms will be made no later than 7 November 2005. The FSA has raised the issue regarding the labelling of these products and asked for clarification on their statuswith the EC in bi-lateral meetings.

The FSA and DEFRA have published draft guidance notes on the new EC GM regulations. This includes information on the labelling of products from genetically modified micro-organisms. This information is based on the current position of the EC and is consistent with information provided to other Member States.

Health Service Premises

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many health clinics have been modernised in *(a)* Chorley South Ribble Primary Care Trust and *(b)* Lancashire since 1997 [172075]

Miss Melanie Johnson: This information is not gathered centrally. Health clinics are most often held in general practice settings. For information relating to the number of general practitioner practices that have been replaced or refurbished since 2000–01, the latest available data, I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave to him on 7 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 39W.

Health Services

Mr. Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been allocated to health in Manchester, Blackley in each of the last seven years. [175009]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested. Expenditure per weighted head in the Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area, which includes the constituency of Manchester, Blackley, has increased from £582.33 in 1997–98 to £992.61 in 2002–03 (the latest year available). This does not represent the total expenditure per head as an element of health expenditure cannot be identified by SHA area.

Eye Tests

Mr. Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many senior citizens in Manchester, Blackley have access to free eye tests. [175010]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data for the number of sight tests by constituency or by the number of senior citizens are not collected centrally.

In 2002–03, the total number of national health service sight tests paid for by the Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority for patients aged 60 and over was 189,900. Sight tests cannot be equated to the numbers of patients.

Heart Surgery

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many residents of Blackpool, North and Fleetwood awaiting heart surgery have had the option of choosing an alternative hospital for quicker treatment in the last 12 months. [175334]

Miss Melanie Johnson: This information is not collected centrally.

Heart Disease/Cancer Care

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been spent on *(a)* heart disease and *(b)* cancer care in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood in each of the last five years. [175330]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected centrally. Allocations of funding for particular treatments are matters for the local primary care trust.

Hepatitis C

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when he will publish his Department's strategy on hepatitis C; [173191]

(2) when he will launch his Department's awareness campaign on hepatitis C; at what targets it is directed; and what the budget is for the campaign. [173192]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department intends to publish a hepatitis C action plan including an awareness campaign to assist implementation of the consultation paper, "Hepatitis C Strategy for England" in the next few months.

Immigrant Medical Inspections

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what authority Hillingdon Primary Care Trust has to use NHS resources for the medical inspection of immigrants. [156848]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The authority for national health service bodies to incur expenditure on medical inspection of immigrants is in sections 1–3 of the National Health Service Act 1977.

The Secretary of State's duties under the Act are delegated to primary care trusts.

Malnutrition

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 168W, on malnutrition (1) what measures and strategies are in place to manage, monitor and screen patients for under nutrition; and if he will make a statement; [175931]

(2) for which specific groups nutritional screening is recommended; and if he will make a statement. [175932]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Measures and strategies are in place to manage, monitor and screen patients for under-nutrition in hospitals, residential care and the wider community. Food and nutrition is one of eight benchmark areas aimed at ensuring that patients are screened on admission, and that appropriate action is taken according to nutritional needs. Nutritional screening is recommended for the care of specific groups, such as those highlighted in the national service frameworks for older people, diabetes and renal. Nutritional screening is also part of locally determined services.

Maternity Services

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will provide *(a)* mortality and *(b)* morbidity statistics for (i) normal vaginal deliveries, (ii) Caesarean sections and (iii) other deliveries in the last five years. [173734]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department does not collect the information in the format requested. However, the table, taken from the latest report on the confidential inquiries into maternal deaths (CEMD) in the United Kingdom, shows the direct and indirect maternal deaths and mortality rates per 100,000 maternities reported to registrars and the CEMD; United Kingdom for each triennium since 1988.

	Triennium			
	1988–90	*1991–93*	*1994–96*	*1997–99*
Maternal deaths known to registrars general				
Number	172	150	175	142
Rate	7.3	[1]6.5	[2]8.0	[3]6.7
Direct deaths known to inquiry				
Number	145	128	134	106
Rate	6.2	5.5	6.1	5.0
Indirect deaths known to inquiry				
Number	93	100	134	136
Rate	4.0	4.3	6.1	6.4
Total known to inquiry				
Number	238	228	268	242
Rate	10.1	9.8	12.2	11.4
Total maternities				
Number	2,347,529	2,317,328	2,197,640	2,123,614

[1] Final Office for National Statistics revised figures for 1991–93: the rate available at the time for the publication of the 1991–93 report was 6.0.

[2] England and Wales figures for 1994 now include underlying cause and mentions (ICD9 630–676).

[3] The rate for 1994–96 in the previous report was 7.4.

Information about morbidity in mothers may be found in table 27, and selected complications by delivery onset method and delivery method can be found in table 28 of "National Health Service Maternity Statistics, England: 2002–03", which can be found at www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public/sb0410.htm. A copy of the bulletin is available in the Library.

ME

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps his Department is taking to help ME sufferers in Lancashire. [172076]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected centrally. Allocation of funding for particular treatments are matters for the local primary care trust.

Mental Health

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what data are available to his Department relating to the numbers of *(a)* primary school age children and *(b)* secondary school age children assessed as needing support from child and adolescent mental health services in each year since 2001; and what proportion of these children are in mainstream education. [177514]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is not collected centrally. A survey by the Office for National Statistics, "Mental Health of Children and Adolescents in Great Britain, ONS 1999", found that among five to 10-year-olds, 10 per cent. of boys and 6 per cent. of girls had a mental disorder. In the 11 to 15-year-old age group, the proportion of children with any type of mental disorder was 13 per cent. for boys and 10 per cent. for girls. Mental disorders can range from clinically significant conduct disorders; emotional disorders, such as anxiety and depression, to hyperactivity.

Mersey Regional Ambulance Service

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what reason numbers of *(a)* emergency ambulances, *(b)* rapid response vehicles and *(c)* treat and refer vehicles in the Mersey Regional Ambulance Service were out of action for parts of the period from 26 to 28 March. [176925]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* The information is not collected centrally.

Mesothelioma

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether he plans a treatment package for mesothelioma sufferers; and if he will make a statement. [174800]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 25 May 2004]:* We are currently considering referring pemetrexed disodium (Alimta), for the treatment of mesothelioma, as a topic for appraisal by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence.

We continue to keep a close eye on clinical trials to determine when the development of clinical guidelines on mesothelioma might be appropriate. The national health service is providing infrastructure and service support costs for two mesothelioma trials currently under way through the national cancer research network.

A lung cancer advisory group has also recently been established to support the development and delivery of high quality services for lung cancer patients. One of the key areas that this group will address is the management of the increasing incidence of mesothelioma.

Mortality Ratios

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the standardised mortality ratios of each hospital trust were in the last year for which figures are available, listed in descending order; what the national average was; and if he will make a statement. [174757]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There is no single "standardised mortality ratio" for hospitals, nor yet full agreement as to how one should be defined.

The Dr. Foster organisation has devised its own ratio which was published in *The Sunday Times*. It is an indicator devised for use by that organisation and the Department of Health does not produce any similar measure.

NHS Equality Adviser

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what powers the NHS Equality Adviser will have to promote greater equality throughout the service; [172605]

(2) whether the NHS Equality Adviser will have powers and duties in relation to facilities in joint use by the NHS and local authority care departments; [172615]

(3) what powers and duties the NHS Equality Adviser will have in relation to companies and organisations supplying private medical services and care to patients in the NHS; [172617]

(4) how the NHS Equality Adviser will interact with the Commission for Equalities and Human Rights; [172606]

(5) whether the Equality Adviser to be appointed in the NHS will have the same powers and duties in respect of each of the six strands of equality to be protected by the Commission for Equalities and Human Rights; [172607]

(6) whether the NHS Equality Adviser will have powers to commence discrimination proceedings in court on behalf of *(a)* employees and *(b)* patients in the NHS; [172618]

(7) what enforcement powers the NHS Equality Adviser will have in respect of breaches of equality laws; [172619]

(8) how the NHS Equality Adviser will safeguard the rights of patients; [172608]

(9) what the remit will be of the NHS Equality Adviser; [172609]

(10) whether the NHS Equality Adviser will have responsibility for children's equality issues in the health service *(a)* before and *(b)* after the appointment of a Children's Commissioner. [172620]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department of Health is in the process of recruiting a National Director for Equality and Human Rights to spearhead a major programme to promote equality and human rights throughout the health and social care system. The remit involves championing and leading action to promote equality within the system and engaging in a dialogue with key stakeholders including service users and their representatives. It will also involve working with

colleagues in the Department, other Government Departments and in other health and social care bodies at a national level to address equality issues and promote a human rights culture.

The Director will assist the Department in complying with its legal duties in relation to promoting equality. The legal powers to enforce equality laws rests with the relevant equality commissions, namely the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Commission for Racial Equality and the Disability Rights Commission. The Director will not exercise powers in relation to facilities in joint use by the national health service and local authority care departments or companies and organisations supplying private medical services and care to patients in the NHS.

The Director will provide strategic leadership and champion the rights of patients from all sections of our diverse communities. Responsibilities for children's issues in the health service lies with the Department for Education and Skills.

The Director will have the same responsibilities in respect of the six strands of equality to be protected by the Commission for Equality and Human Rights and will work constructively with the new commission as is currently the case between the Department of Health and the existing equality commissions.

NHS Land (Sale Profits)

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Health who will receive the profits of sale of NHS land for housing where a foundation trust is in existence. [177470]

Mr. Hutton: A national health service foundation trust may retain the profits of sale of its land subject to demonstrating that these will be used to further its public interest mandate.

NHS Staff (Salaries)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average salary for NHS administrative and clerical staff was in each year since 1997. [175357]

Mr. Hutton: No information on the earnings of national health staff was collected centrally in 1997. The estimated average basic pay of administrative and clerical staff on national pay rates between 1998 and 2003 is shown in the table.

£

	Average basic pay
1998	11,700
1999	12,200
2000	13,100
2001	13,600
2002	14,200
2003	14,700

Source:
The annual NHS staff earnings survey in 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2002. The figures for 2001 and 2003 are based on the previous year's average adjusted in line with the appropriate pay agreement.

The information in this answer relates only to England. The earnings of HNS Staff in Scotland and Wales is a matter for the devolved administrations. While the institutions in Northern Ireland are dissolved, responsibility rests with Ministers in the Northern Ireland Office.

NHS Waiting Lists

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes there have been to NHS waiting list times in the last seven years for residents of Blackpool, North and Fleetwood. [175336]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information on waiting times for the national health service organisations which serve Blackpool, North and Fleetwood constituency are shown in the tables.

In-patient waiting lists by provider—Preston area

	Unit name	*Total*	*Patients waiting for admission by month waiting*						
			0–2[1]	*3–5*[1]	*6–8*[1]	*9–11*[1]	*12–14*[1]	*15–17*[1]	*18+*[1]
1996–97	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	8,970	4,137	2,352	1,445	1,000	18	15	3
1996–97	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	1,857	1,079	463	249		66	0	0
1997–98	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	8,500	4,079	1,969	1,334	787	257	74	0
1997–98	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	2,121	1,299	537	183	102	0	0	
1998–99	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	7,602	4,154	1,729	1,043	544	132	0	0
1998–99	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	2,051	1,126	527	248	132	17	1	
1999–2000	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	7,025	4,110	1,701	853	359	2	0	0
1999–2000	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	1,967	1,228	453	186	90	10	0	
2000–01	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	8,926	5,559	1,987	1,002	378	0	0	0
2001–02	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	8,891	5,565	2,055	995	276	0	0	0
March 2003	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	8,445	5,473	2,096	711	165	0	0	0
March 2004	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	8,275	5,527	2,123	625	0	0	0	0

[1] Not seen
Source:
Department of Health KH07

Out-patient waiting lists by provider—Preston area

	Name	*GP referral to consultant waiting list in weeks*	
		Not seen 13 to 25	*Not seen 26 plus*
1996–97	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	281	19
1996–97	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	941	13
1997–98	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	761	110
1997–98	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	1,113	235
1998–99	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	1,563	443
1998–99	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	1,503	714

Out-patient waiting lists by provider—Preston area

	Name	GP referral to consultant waiting list in weeks: Not seen 13 to 25	Not seen 26 plus
1999–2000	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	1,039	284
1999–2000	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	855	187
2000–01	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	1,904	287
2001–02	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	1,653	

Source:
Department of Health QM08

Date	Name	Not seen 13–17	Not seen 17–21	Not seen 21–26	Not seen 26+
March 2003	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	819	157	0	0
March 2004	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	686	0	0	0

Note:
Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust was established 1 August 2002 from the acute services of Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust and Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust. For 2001 and 2002, data for both trusts was reported under Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust

in-patient waiting lists by provider—Blackpool area

	Name	Total	Patients waiting for admission by month waiting: 0–2[1]	3–5[1]	6–8[1]	9–11[1]	12–14[1]	15–17[1]	18 +[1]
1996–97	Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust	36	33	3	0	0	0	0	0
1996–97	Blackpool Victoria Hospital NHS Trust	8,393	4,764	1,986	1,025	493	108	14	3
1997–98	Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust	20	20	0	0	0	0	0	0
1997–98	Blackpool Victoria Hospital NHS Trust	9,866	5,428	2,109	1,341	673	228	87	0
1998–99	Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust	13	13	0	0	0	0	0	0
1998–99	Blackpool Victoria Hospital NHS Trust	8,290	5,135	1,793	803	336	148	75	0
1999–2000	Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust	13	12	1	0	0	0	0	0
1999–2000	Blackpool Victoria Hospital NHS Trust	8,134	4,851	1,756	816	399	194	118	0
2000–01	Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust	12	12	0	0	0	0	0	0
2000–01	Blackpool Victoria Hospital NHS Trust	7,791	4,561	1,896	825	361	112	36	0
2001–02	Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust	12	12	0	0	0	0	0	0
2001–02	Blackpool Victoria Hospital NHS Trust	7,772	3,913	1,975	1,088	607	189	0	0
2002–03	Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Hospitals NHS Trust	7,306	4,091	1,841	967	407	0	0	0
2003–04	Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Hospitals NHS Trust	6,853	4,296	1,844	713	0	0	0	0

[1] Not seen

Source:
Department of Health KH07

Out-patient waiting lists by provider—Blackpool area

	Name	GP referral to consultant waitinglist in weeks: Not seen 13 to 25	Not seen 26 plus
1996–97	Blackpool Victoria Hospital NHS Trust	1,414	0
1997–98	Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust	86	0
1997–98	Blackpool Victoria Hospital NHS Trust	254	259
1998–99	Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust	82	0
1998–99	Blackpool Victoria Hospital NHS Trust	853	185
1999–2000	Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust	4	0
1999–2000	Blackpool Victoria Hospital NHS Trust	695	238
2000–01	Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust	37	0
2000–01	Blackpool Victoria Hospital NHS Trust	743	199
2001–02	Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust	50	0
2001–02	Blackpool Victoria Hospital NHS Trust	701	0

Source:
Department of Health QM08

	Name	Not seen 13 to 17	Not seen 17 to 21	Not seen 21 to 26	Not seen 26 plus
2002–03	Blackpool PCT	13	7	0	0
2002–03	Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Hospitals NHS Trust	478	198	0	0
2003–04	Blackpool PCT	4	0	0	0
2003–04	Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Hospitals NHS Trust	185	0	0	0

Note:
Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Hospitals NHS Trust was formed from the merger of Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust and Blackpool Victoria Hospital NHS Trust in April 2002

Obesity Awareness and Solutions Trust

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on his Department's recent rejection of a Section 64 Grant Application by the Obesity Awareness and Solutions Trust. [171407]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department has supported the work of The Obesity Awareness and Solutions Trust (TOAST) for two years (2001–02 to 2002–03) through the Department's Section 64 Grant Scheme.

Due to an administrative oversight, they did not apply for funding for 2003–04 but made an application for 2004–05 for three years. A large number of applications were received for funding from April 2004 which resulted in intense competition for limited funds. This has resulted in a number of applications being rejected, including the applications from TOAST.

Playing Safe

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what research has been carried out into the effectiveness of www.playingsafe.co.uk in altering the sexual behaviour of young people; [175797]

(2) what the total cost has been to public funds of www.playingsafe.co.uk. [175798]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The website www.playingsafely.co.uk supports the Government's "Sex Lottery" sexual health campaign, which aims to raise awareness of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and promote safer sex among young adults. The website has had over 1.5 million visitors and a recent online survey to evaluate its success showed that 87 per cent., of users said the site had increased their knowledge of STIs.

The total cost to public funds of the website since its launch (December 2002 to May 2004) is £119,000.

Public Meetings

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to review the guidance given to NHS organisations concerning arrangements for holding meetings in public. [172345]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The contents of the Health Service Circular on open board meetings (HSC 1998/999) are currently being reviewed. Revised guidance will be issued in due course.

School Vending Machines

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent discussions he has had with the Department for Education and Skills on the implications for healthy eating of the use of vending machines in schools. [176126]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* My right hon. Friends the Secretary of State for Health and the Secretary of State for Education and Skills meet regularly on a range of issues, including healthy eating in schools. There are a number of pieces of work currently under way that are considering the implications of vending machines, which will feed into the Public Health White Paper to be published in autumn:

The healthier vending machine project is currently being piloted as part of the food in schools programme, which is jointly led by the Department of Health and Department for Education and Skills.

The Secretary of State for Education and Skills is working with other Ministers—including myself—to develop a "Healthy Living Blueprint", to bring a whole school approach to food and nutrition.

The Department has been working with other Government Departments on "Choosing a Better Diet" which forms part of the overall "Choosing Health?" consultation.

Sexual Health

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many cases of sexually transmitted infections were reported in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex; [176928]

(2) what the prevalence rate of reported cases of sexually transmitted infections in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years was in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex. [176929]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer my hon. Friend to the replies I gave to my hon. Friends the Members for Workington (Tony Cunningham) and for Heywood and Middleton (Jim Dobbin) on 25 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1610–11W.

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many attendances at family planning clinics by people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000, broken down by sex. [176930]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave to my hon. Friends the Members for Workington (Tony Cunningham) and for Heywood and Middleton (Jim Dobbin) on 7 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 34–36W.

Smoking

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment the Government have made of the impact of people smoking on television and in films upon young people's decision on whether or not to start smoking. [176288]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* The Government are taking steps to reduce the impact of smoking on young people. The glamourising of tobacco products through advertising, promotion and sponsorship as well as through their depiction in the media is linked to smoking rates.

That is why the Tobacco Advertising and Promotion Act 2002 provides for a comprehensive ban on advertising of tobacco products. There is also an Office of Communications code covering the portrayal of smoking in television programmes. This code specifically requires that the portrayal of smoking should be avoided in children's programmes, and included only when there is a strong editorial case for inclusion. In other programmes likely to be widely seen by young people, smoking should be included only where context or dramatic veracity requires it. In such programmes smoking should not be prominently featured as a normal and attractive activity.

The independent British Board of Film Classification is currently undertaking a consultation exercise to update its guidelines on granting classifications for films which can be seen by children. The consultation seeks comments on whether smoking in a film should have an impact on classification and what that impact should be. The new guidelines will be published at the end of the year.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the impact the NHS smoking cessation services have had on the number of people who have stopped smoking in each year since 1999. [176103]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 29 May 2004]:* The number of people who have stopped smoking at the four week follow-up stage in each year since 1999 is given in the table.

Number successfully quitting smoking at four week follow-up (based on self-report) of those setting a quit date in 1999–2000, 2000–01, 2001–02, 2002–03 and April to December 2003— England

	Numbers
1999–2000	5,761
2000–01	64,554
2001–02	119,834
2002–03	124,082
Total April to December 2003	112,174
Total April 1999 to December 2003	426,405

Note:
1. In 1999–2000 smoking cessation services were set up in Health Action Zones (HAZ), with services rolled out across the NHS to all health authorities in 2000–01.
2. Data for 2003 are provisional.

Social Care

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment he has made of the time taken for Criminal Records Bureau checks to be completed in respect of social care workers; and what representations he has received about problems caused by delays in this regard. [173951]

Ms Blears: I have been asked to reply.

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) continually assesses its performance against its published service levels across all sectors and employment categories. I am unable to provide my hon. Friend with an answer to his specific question relating to the completion of checks for social care workers, because the Criminal Records Bureau's computer system does not hold this information centrally.

However, since June 2003 the CRB has been issuing on average 93 per cent. of all Standard and Enhanced Disclosures within two and four weeks respectively, against published service standards of 90 per cent. The bureau is processing over 50,000 Disclosures per week. On 12 May, the CRB issued its four millionth Disclosure.

The CRB has received a number of representations from individuals and organisations across all groups about the effects of delays in completing Disclosures. Again, the bureau does not currently record centrally the number of representations received from or concerning social care workers. The bureau aims to resolve any issues in the shortest time possible in order to minimise disruption to people who require the clearance to occupy an employment position.

In addition, and in accordance with the Agency's Framework Document, the CRB has both formal and informal consultative arrangements for all employment sectors to help identify and resolve emerging issues affecting the delivery of the Disclosure service.

Teenage Pregnancy

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the most recent statistics are for teenage pregnancy. [172160]

Ruth Kelly: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from John Pullinger to Jim Cunningham, dated 9 June 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent question asking what the most recent statistics are for teenage pregnancy. I am replying in his absence. (172160)

The most recent complete year for which provisional figures for teenage pregnancy are available is 2001. Final figures will be published later this year.

Provisional estimates for the first two quarters of 2002 based on incomplete abortion data were published in May 2004 and are available on the National Statistics website at:

http://www.nationalstatistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_health/hsq22_vl.pdf

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Electoral Registration

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many electors were on the electoral roll for the constituency of Sittingbourne and Sheppey in each year since 1997.[177727]

Mr. Leslie: Based on figures published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in respect of the annual register of electors this information is as follows:

	Electors
1997	64,628
1998	65,189
1999	65,304
2000	65,594
2001	66,020
2002	63,142
2003	62,341

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many constituents were on the electoral roll for Chesham and Amersham in each year since 1992. [177920]

Mr. Leslie: Based on figures published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in respect of the annual register of electors this information is as follows:

	Electors
1992	70,926
1993	70,747
1994	71,020
1995	69,242
1996	69,660
1997	70,084
1998	71,010
1999	69,991
2000	69,748
2001 (February)	69,189
2001 (December)	69,350
2002	69,354
2003	69,360

Honorary QCs

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will end the practice of awarding honorary QCs. [177144]

Mr. Leslie: My right hon. and noble Friend the Secretary of State will, following his written statement of 26 May, make a further announcement on the future of the award of Queen's Counsel honoris causa, having discussed the issues with the Bar Councils and Law Societies in England and Wales and Northern Ireland.

Postal Voting

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the combined electorate of the four all-postal regions for the purpose of the European Parliamentary election on 10 June is; how many ballot papers in those elections reached the Post Office *(a)* on or before 1 June and *(b)* on each day subsequently; and how many ballot papers were delivered other than by the Post Office (i) on or before 1 June and (ii) on each subsequent day.[177744]

Mr. Leslie: As at December 2003, the combined electorate of the North East, East Midlands, Yorkshire and the Number and North West regions was 14,083,004. Elections are not run by central Government. However, from discussions with returning officers, the relevant printing firms and the Royal Mail, we understand that 99.24 per cent. of ballot papers were with the Royal Mail or had been hand delivered by local authorities by midnight on 1 June. Those few batches which were not collected by midnight on 1 June were picked up by the Royal Mail at around 5.10am on 2 June. Small-scale problems which have necessitated the reprinting or issuing of new ballot papers after this date have been dealt with on a local level and figures are not held centrally. New ballot papers issued due to an elector reporting the original paper lost or spoilt are again administered at a local level and no figures are kept centrally.

Public Defenders

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the cost to the Legal Services Commission of employing its own lawyers through the Public Defenders Pilot Scheme was in the latest period for which figures are available. [176557]

Mr. Lammy: The cost to the Legal Services Commission (including national insurance contributions and overtime payments) for all legal staff employed in the Public Defender Service for the financial year 2003–04 was £1,727,928.00. The staff costs for fully qualified lawyers were £1,271,531.64.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Tourism (Bootle)

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the work of regional development agencies in developing tourism in Bootle. [177713]

Mr. Caborn: The North West Development Agency (NWDA) is working closely with The Mersey Partnership (TMP), the nominated Destination Management Organisation (DMO) for Merseyside. DMOs are effectively mini tourist boards that will ensure a strong visitor and market focus to all that is done within the region, and aim to strengthen the connection that exists within the region between businesses and other organisations that make up the tourism sector.

During 2003–04 TMP received £320,000 from the NWDA's marketing image budget for tourism and investment campaigns to promote Merseyside. £419,000 was also provided from the NWDA's tourism budget for a variety of projects.

In addition the NWDA's Merseyside area office has supported a programme for the Mersey Waterfront Regional Park, which covers an area from Southport to Wirral. The NWDA is also investing £268,348 from the Environmental Regeneration Programme to Sefton council to create New Public Realm along Stanley road in Bootle town centre. The new works will provide Bootle with an identity, which will encourage future investment in the area.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Coalminers' Compensation

Mr. Barron: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much has been paid to solicitors under the Claims Handling Agreement involved in the compensation claims for *(a)* chronic bronchitis and emphysema and *(b)* vibration white finger of former coalminers. [176616]

Nigel Griffiths: As of 26 May 2004 the total cost paid to solicitors for respiratory disease claims is £271.1 million and for vibration white finger claims the total cost is £82.3 million.

Commission for Equality and Human Rights

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she is taking to ensure that the new Commission for Equality and Human Rights will have the *(a)* capacity and *(b)* competence to (i) deal with and (ii) give due weight to the full range of issues for which it will be responsible. [176490]

Ms Hewitt: As set out in the White Paper, "Fairness for All", the Government will ensure that the Commission for Equality and Human Rights is led by a Board that reflects the communities it serves and understands their needs, has strong strategic capabilities, and is supported by skilled and expert staff. The CEHR will develop its priorities in close consultation with its stakeholders, reinforced by a statutory duty to consult on its strategic plan. This transparent process will ensure a balanced approach to prioritisation in which the full range of relevant issues is given due weight. The Government is committed to ensuring that the CEHR is adequately resourced.

Container Terminals (Southampton)

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the effect upon trade of recent decisions on container terminals at Southampton. [177198]

Jacqui Smith: None.

Crown Post Offices

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many staff have been transferred or made redundant from Crown post offices in each of the last 12 months; and of the former how many have been transferred under TUPE. [177746]

Mr. Timms: These are operational matters for Post Office Ltd. and I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Economic Regeneration

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much was spent on each Priority Area for Economic Regeneration in *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2002–03 and *(c)* 2003–04 by (i) her Department and (ii) the relevant regional development agency; and how much is budgeted to be spent in (A) 2004–05 and (B) 2005–06. [173780]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* I understand that the term "Priority Area for Economic Regeneration" is used in the Regional Planning Guidance 9. The criteria for designating such areas include: above average unemployment levels, high levels of social deprivation, low skill levels, dependence on declining industries, derelict urban fabric, peripherality and insularity. The Areas are not intended to be covered by a Single Regeneration Scheme and projects within these areas are potentially eligible for funding from a number of different sources. The Department does not collect information on total expenditure in relation to all these areas and such information is available only at disproportionate cost.

Farm Export Subsidies

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry by what date she expects EU export subsidies on farm products to end. [177485]

Alun Michael: I have been asked to reply

A precise date for the ending of all forms of export subsidy on agricultural products remains a matter for negotiation within the WTO.

Farnborough Airshow

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what support her Department is giving to the organisers of the Farnborough Airshow taking place from 19 to 25 July; and whether this includes assistance to enable overseas visitors to attend. [177500]

Jacqui Smith: The Department for Trade and Industry is not providing any financial support to the organisers of the Farnborough Airshow. We will provide financial support to enable overseas visitors to attend the Airshow.

Ministerial Visits

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list visits made by each Minister in the Department between December 2003 and April 2004, broken down by *(a)* date, *(b)* constituency visited and *(c)* cost. [171561]

Ms Hewitt: Between December 2003 and April 2004 DTI Ministers undertook the following domestic visits:

Date	*Constituency visited*	*Cost for Minister (£)*
Secretary of State for Trade and Industry		
5 December 2003	Bristol, North, Monmouth and Cardiff, Central	179
Minister for Industry, Regions and Deputy Minister for Women and Equality		
9 December 2003	Morley and	406

Date	Constituency visited	Cost for Minister (£)
	Rothwell,Bradford, North, Leeds, Central	
11 December 2003	The Wrekin	200
16 December 2003	Kingswood Bristol, East Yeovil	303
5 January 2004	Redditch Meriden Birmingham, Yardley Warwick and Leamington	315
13 January 2004	Newham	[1]
29 January 2004	Dudley, South Birmingham, Ladywood	286
11 February 2004	Cheadle	350
25 February 2004	Hyndburn Lancaster and Wyre Preston	210
10 March 2004	Eastbourne	31
15 March 2004	Wolverhampton, South-West Wolverhampton, North-East	368
22 March 2004	Oxford, East	437
25 March 2004	West Bromwich	170
1 April 2004	Ilford, North	[1]
2 April 2004	Birmingham, Edgbaston	120
16 April 2004	Newcastle upon Tyne, East and Wallsend	505
20 April 2004	Ellesmere Port and Neston	365
22 April 2004	Meriden	150
27 April 2004	West Ham Bethnal Green and Bow Cities of London and Westminster	[1]
Minister for Energy, e Commerce and Postal Services		
6 January 2004	Fylde and Blackburn	283
19 January 2004	Newbury	
11 February 2004	Bristol, East, Bristol, West and Bristol, North-West	147
25 February 2004	North-West Cambridgeshire and Peterborough	80
15 March 2004	Mansfield and City of York	179
17 March 2004	North Warwickshire	167
22 March 2004	South Swindon	102
1 April 2004	Luton, South	31
Minister for Trade		
15 January 2004	Stratford-on-Avon	75
5 February 2004	Bosworth	85
3 March 2004	Broxtowe	126
9 March 2004	Glasgow, Kelvin Glasgow, Govan Glasgow, Maryhill	557
11 March 2004	Cambridge	108
24 April 2003	Blaby	466
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Small Business and Enterprise		
21 April 2004	Tewkesbury	150
26 April 2004	Meriden Birmingham, Edgbaston Stoke-on-Trent, North	109
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Science and Innovation		
12 January 2004	Harrogate and Knaresborough	231
20 January 2004	Sheffield, Central	191
30 January 2004	Runcorn East, Liverpool Central Wirral, South	327
5 February 2004	Cambridge	[1]
19 February 2004	Croydon, South	6.00
20 February 2004	Southampton, Test	85
4 March 2004	Northampton, South and Cambridge	[1]
1 April 2004	Canterbury	[1]
30 April 2004	Edinburgh, South and East Kilbride	388
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Employment Relations, Competition and Consumers		
15 January 2004	Gateshead, East and Washington, West	135
12 February 2004	Warwick and Leamington	59
13 February 2004	Leeds, Central	0
27 February 2004	Liverpool, Riverside	245
9 March 2004	Edinburgh, North and Leith	285
11 March 2004	Birmingham	141
22 March 2004	Sheffield, Central	181
30 April 2004	Bradford, South	0

[1] Costs for these visits are included in normal office running costs.

In respect of overseas visits, the Government publish on an annual basis the total costs of all ministerial overseas travel and a list of all visits by Cabinet Ministers costing in excess of £500. Information for 2003–4 is currently being collected and will be published as soon as it is ready.

Post Services

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions her Department has had with *(a)* Royal Mail and *(b)* Postwatch on quality of service. [176560]

Mr. Timms: The Department has regular discussions with both Royal Mail and Postwatch on a variety of topics including Royal Mail's quality of service.

Royal Mail's top priority is to improve its quality of service performance. It has drawn up detailed plans to tackle the recent problems and Ministers have Allan Leighton's personal assurance that these will be implemented vigorously. We are confident that the management is committed and determined to put things right.

Regional Development Agencies

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps are being taken to reduce the administrative load on regional development agencies. [174698]

Jacqui Smith: We have to strike the right balance between giving England's Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) the freedom they need to operate effectively and ensuring that public money is spent sensibly and without undue risks. We are continually improving arrangements for funding and tasking RDAs and monitoring their performance.

As noted in a recent report by the National Audit Office, "Success in the Regions", much has been done to streamline funding arrangements for the RDAs, for example the introduction of the single budgetary framework in April 2002, which has allowed the RDAs much greater spending flexibility.

The NAO report made 10 recommendations to streamline processes and enable the RDAs to get on with the business of encouraging economic development while providing Departments with the information and levels of public accountability that they need. Working with the RDAs and other Departments, the Department of Trade and Industry is working to implement all of these recommendations, including the NAO's main

recommendation, simplification of the RDAs' tasking framework to achieve closer alignment with the Regional Economic Strategies produced by the RDAs and relevant Public Service Agreement targets. Action has already been completed on some recommendations, for example, Government offices' reports to the DTI on the RDAs' performance now take place every six months as recommended.

Renewable Energy

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she is taking to help United Kingdom firms supply the Chinese market for renewable energy. [173456]

Mr. Timms: The Department of Trade and Industry maintains close contact with the Chinese authorities with regard to energy matters, and including renewable energy. This contact is managed day-to-day through the commercial sections of the British diplomatic posts in China, and export and trade promoters of UK Trade and Investment and of the DTI's New and Renewable Energy Programme.

We are currently working with the Chinese to assist with their design and drafting of regulations to increase their use of renewable energy over the coming years. In close co-operation with the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership (REEEP), we received a delegation of Chinese law makers in March, for a programme of meetings when they were able to discuss the issues involved with UK Government Departments and with UK industry. In May we sent a specialist who works with our Distributed Generation Working Group, and a Trade Promoter of the DTI's New and Renewable Energy Programme, to Beijing to join a working group developing the drafting of these regulations, which are expected to come into force next year.

We will continue to support this initiative, and also to promote contact between companies and industry bodies of our two countries. We have commissioned the development of a website designed specifically to make available information on renewable energy capabilities and opportunities in each country. This website is nearing completion, and can now be viewed on www.ukchinarenewables.co.uk. We understand that a UK specialist wind energy company is once again going to engage in training Chinese companies in the development of wind energy, in June; at least partially as a result of our trade promotional activities. And we are preparing to sponsor a presence by UK industry at a wind energy conference and exhibition in Beijing at the end of October.

We work with the services of UK Trade and Industry, which makes available to firms a range of market information and market research, and provides assistance with participation in trade missions, exhibitions, and conferences. In addition, we make focused market information available to UK firms that are active in the supply of goods and services for renewable energy, and we lead participation in some further trade events within China, brief a number of Chinese trade delegations visiting this country, and accompany some to meet and to visit UK companies. The website mentioned above is an example of making market information more readily available to UK companies. The last trade delegation that we led to China was to exhibit at an environmental exhibition in Beijing in December. That initiative was organised in conjunction also with a JEMU environmental trade mission to three provinces, and with the UK themed workshop "Think UK", arranged by the British embassy and UK industrial sponsors. Several UK renewable energy firms participated in that workshop, and achieved prominence at a senior level as a result. The next Renewable Energy trade mission that we are planning is the Wind Energy exhibition and conference in Beijing at the end of October. Meanwhile we continue to work with individual UK companies that are developing business opportunities.

I attended and spoke at the "China Day" event at the International Renewable Energy Conference in Bonn on 2 June at the invitation of Mr. Zhang Guo Bao, the Chinese Vice Minister of the National Development and Reform Commission.

Research and Development

Mr. Norman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how many applications for research and development grants there have been under *(a)* the Smart scheme, *(b)* the grant scheme and *(c)* regional competitions; [175953]

(2) what the *(a)* success rate for applications and *(b)* value of the average award are for research and development grants under (i) the Smart scheme, (ii) the grant scheme and (iii) regional competitions; [175954]

(3) what the timetable is for the next regional competitions for research and development grants; [175955]

(4) what the total value is of research and development grants paid out under *(a)* the Smart scheme, *(b)* the grant scheme and *(c)* regional competitions. [175956]

Jacqui Smith: The first regional competition deadline for Grant for Research and Development is 28 May 2004. The dates of further competitions will be decided subsequently. Given that we are still accepting applications within this competition round, I am unable to provide figures on the number of applications received under the competitive environment. We have yet to make any offers under the current competition round.

The following table covers the number of applications for and the number of offers made under Smart and Grant for Research and Development for the past three years.

	Smart[1]		*Grant for R and D*[1]	
	Number of applications[2]	*Number of offers*[2]	*Number of applications*	*Number of offers*
2001–02	1,134	777	—	—
2002–03	1,356	1,142	—	—
2003–04	651	618	805	389

[1] Following a review of the Department's business support, Grant for Research and Development was introduced on 1 June 2003 to replace and enhance the Smart scheme. Smart remained open to applications up until 31 August 2003 to allow applicants the opportunity to adjust to the new product. Grant for Research and Development has proved just as popular as its predecessor so

regional competitions for the grants have been introduced to ensure that expenditure on the product remains under control and to ensure that those research and development projects which best meet the grant selection criteria are supported.

[2] Included Technology Reviews and Studies, which closed to applications on 31 May 2003 and replaced by the Investigating an Innovative Idea pilot on 1 June 2003.

The following table provides information on the average grant under the 'research' and 'development' elements of Smart and Grant for Research and Development, taken on figures from the last three years, and how this compares to the maximum grant available.

£

	Feasibility/Research		Development	
	Average grant	Maximum grant	Average grant	Maximum grant
Smart	41,905	45,000	97,359	150,000
Grant for R and D	62,674	75,000	123,550	200,000

The expenditure on Smart in 2001–02, 2002–03 and 2003–04 was £23.7 million, £32.1 million and £42.8 million respectively. The expenditure on Grant for Research and Development in 2003–04 (the product was launched on 1 June 2003) was £3.1 million.

Small Businesses

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps her Department takes to help small UK businesses recover money which is owed to them by large multi-national companies. [176832]

Nigel Griffiths: Where contracts are governed by UK law, businesses may use the Late Payment of Commercial Debts legislation (as amended) to claim interest and compensation on late paid debts.

This Government have always recognised that late payment of debts can have serious effects on the cash flow of smaller companies, which is why we had a manifesto commitment to introduce a Late Payment Act to allow small businesses to:

claim interest on late payment from other business or public sector bodies;

allow creditors to claim a fixed sum of compensation to cover debt recovery costs should late payment happen.

The Government also established the Better Payment Practice Group whose website lists the payment record of companies.

The package of measures has had a positive effect on payment times. The Grant Thornton European Business Survey showed that the average time taken in the UK to settle accounts in 1997 was 49 days. By 2002 this had fallen to 41 days. By comparison, the average settlement time in our European neighbours was 50 days. A recent survey by the REL Consultancy Group looked at average days payable outstanding (DPO) and concluded that UK companies' payment performance is 33.6 days against 42.4 days for Europe as a whole.

Because of concerns that suppliers would not utilise the legislation for fear of reprisals or boycotts, I have also undertaken as Minister to write, in cases where invoices are not disputed, on behalf of small businesses to the managing directors of companies to convey their complaint and seek an explanation and appropriate action. I urge all Members of Parliament to do the same on behalf of constituents.

DEFENCE

Absence without Leave

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks have been reported absent without leave in each of the last five years; of those, how many served in Iraq; and if he will make a statement. [176112]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 8 June 2004]:* Figures for the number of trained personnel who are recorded as going/being absent without leave are given in the tables. No officers in the Naval Service or the RAF went absent during the last five years. Figures for the Army are unable to be broken down into officers and other ranks as the information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. For the same reason, it is not possible to break down the figures to show any who may have served in Iraq.

Navy

Calendar year	Total number reported AWOL[1]
1999	35
2000	50
2001	85
2002	90
2003	115

Royal Marines

Calendar year	Total number reported AWOL[1]
1999	15
2000	20
2001	15
2002	20
2003	15

Army

Financial year	Total number reported AWOL[1]
1998–99	1,400
1999–2000	1,665
2000–01	1,850
2001–02	1,655
2002–03	1,685

RAF

Financial year	Total number reported AWOL[1]
1998–99	20
1999–2000	20
2000–01	20
2001–02	15
2002–03	25

[1] Rounded to the nearest 5.

Recording of absence differs between the Naval Service, the Army and the RAF, which means that the figures are not directly comparable on a tri-Service basis. Additionally, the Naval Service changed the basis of their reporting in 2001. The Naval Service and the Army record multiple periods of absence by the same

person. The RAF registers an individual once, regardless of how many times they are absent within a financial year.

Afghanistan

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his current estimate is of the number of civilians killed in Afghanistan by the activities of *(a)* UK, *(b)* United States and *(c)* other military forces not indigenous to Afghanistan since October 2002; and what methods are used to assess the cause of deaths and injuries to civilians in Afghanistan by foreign military activities. [176904]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence is aware of no Afghan civilian deaths relating to the activities of the United Kingdom's forces serving in Afghanistan since October 2002. I cannot speak for the forces of other individual nations, but I can say the coalition makes every effort to minimise the impact of military action on the Afghan population. As I explained in my answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Norwich, North (Dr. Gibson) on 6 February 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1104–05W, there are no reliable means of ascertaining the number of civilians killed during combat operations in Afghanistan.

Astute Submarine

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the anticipated order is for the Astute Class Submarine programme; and what the anticipated phasing of the order is. [175576]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* There are three Astute Class Submarines currently on contract with BAE Systems. Further orders for the Astute Class Submarine are being considered and an announcement will be made at the appropriate time.

Departmental Administration Budget

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress has been made towards the 5 per cent. reduction in real terms in his Department's administration budget by 2008, announced by the Chancellor in the House on 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 331. [176505]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence has a vigorous programme in place to drive down overheads and release resources to the front line. The real terms reduction in administration costs of 5 per cent. or more (against a 2005–06 baseline) will be a central feature of all Departments' public spending settlements to be announced in detail later this year.

Diego Garcia

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the United Kingdom has transferred persons detained in custody in *(a)* Afghanistan and *(b)* Iraq to Diego Garcia since October 2001; and whether the UK has given permission to the United States to do so. [175068]

Mr. Ingram: No.

Fast Jet Pilots

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the RAF's future requirement for fast jet pilots. [176479]

Mr. Ingram: The future requirement for Royal Air Force manpower, including fast jet pilots, is kept under regular review to take account of various factors including changing commitments, Defence Planning Assumptions and the introduction of new aircraft types and equipment. The RAF's fast jet force remains an important part of the United Kingdom's military capability.

Gender Pay Gap

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the pay gap between men and women employed by his Department and its agencies in *(a)* Southampton, *(b)* Eastleigh, *(c)* Winchester and *(d)* Romsey. [171625]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence, in common with all other Government Departments, conducted an equal pay audit following the publication of the report by the Equal Opportunities Commission Equal Pay Task Force, Just Pay, in March 2001. The outcome of the audit, including an initial action plan, was submitted to the Cabinet Office in April 2003. Further work has been conducted over the last year. This work did not address particular units but nevertheless demonstrated that MOD's pay system treats men and women on an equal basis. The Ministry of Defence intends to place a copy of its action plan in the Library of the House as soon as it has concluded discussions with the Cabinet Office.

Harriers GR9

Mr. John Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will publish all or part of the investment appraisal upon which he decided to roll forward the Harriers GR9 to RAF Cottesmore. [177014]

Mr. Ingram: The decision that Harrier Air Depth maintenance support work should roll forward to RAF Cottesmore as the centre of gravity for logistic support, was taken following the results of a comprehensive Investment Appraisal (LA) which fully supported the decision by a clear margin over the other option. All key stakeholders within the Ministry of Defence, including the Chief Executive of Defence Aviation Repair Agency and the RAF were involved in the LA.

It is not appropriate to release the LA at this time, as it forms the first phase of other work to decide the location of centres of gravity for logistic support for other air platforms. This further work is still under ministerial consideration.

Human Rights Act

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what guidance he has issued to military personnel on the application to them of the Human Rights Act 1998 *(a)* in the United Kingdom and *(b)* abroad. [176325]

Mr. Ingram: The guidance and training given to military personnel reflects the importance placed on their acting within the law, whether in the United Kingdom or abroad. Personnel are also informed of their own rights under the law.

International Committee of the Red Cross

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was informed by his officials at their meeting in April that the concerns raised by the ICRC in their interim report were being investigated. [173453]

Mr. Hoon: The International Committee of the Red Cross acknowledged at the meeting with Ministry of Defence Officials that they were already aware that their concerns raised in the interim report were being addressed.

Iraq

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which provisions of the Geneva Conventions will cease to apply in Iraq following the handover of sovereignty on 30 June. [177584]

Mr. Hoon: Those parts of the Geneva Convention that set out the rights and responsibilities of an Occupying Power will no longer be relevant when the Iraqi Interim Government assumes authority on 1 July.

Military Personnel (Afghanistan)

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what reports he has received on the incidence of *(a)* rape and *(b)* other sexual abuse of Afghan women by international military personnel serving in Afghanistan; and if he will make a statement. [176056]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence has not received any such reports, although I am aware of the concerns expressed in a March 2004 Human Rights Watch report regarding the use of "culturally insensitive" methods during coalition operations in South and South-East Afghanistan. While I cannot speak for the forces of other nations, I understand no United Kingdom military personnel have been accused of committing any form of sexual offence in Afghanistan. Were any to be so, they would be dealt with under the relevant British military discipline procedures and, depending on the offence, the criminal law.

Osama Bin Laden

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether UK forces in Afghanistan have been given the authority to kill Osama bin Laden. [176827]

Mr. Hoon: The Rules of Engagement for United Kingdom forces in Afghanistan ensure that they remain within international law, which requires that the use of force is limited to that which is necessary and proportionate, depending on the circumstances in which they find themselves.

Recruitment (Army)

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many new recruits have applied to join the Army in the past year; and how many of those have been *(a)* judged suitable, *(b)* accepted for training and *(c)* deferred. [177145]

Mr. Caplin: The number of new recruits who have applied to join the Army in the past year (training year 2003–2004), have been judged suitable, accepted for training and deferred are detailed as follows.

Training year—2003–04

	Number of new recruits
Applicants	35,224
Judged suitable/job offer	18,133
Accepted for training	13,783
Deferred[1]	10,099

[1] Deferrals include those who are deferred for medical reasons, for fitness and as a result of the Principal Selection officer interview held at the end of attendance at a Recruit Selection Centre

It should be noted that those deferred will normally reapply at a later stage, hence the figures for those deferred and accepted for training will not equate to the job offer figure in year.

Road Traffic Accidents (Service Personnel)

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the circumstances were of the death of Major James Stenner and Sergeant Norman Patterson in a road traffic accident in Baghdad on 1 January; what rank of officer was responsible for their travel arrangements; who was driving the vehicle at the time of the crash; and what the investigation concluded about levels of alcohol in the blood of the deceased. [176333]

Mr. Ingram: These questions will be examined as part of the Board of Inquiry process and at the forthcoming Coroner's Inquests. It would not therefore be appropriate for me to comment at this stage.

Royal Fleet Auxiliary

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the total *(a)* capital and *(b)* running costs to the department of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary are in 2004–05; and if he will make a statement. [176746]

Mr. Ingram: CINC FLEET does not manage costs on the basis of platform types but on functions. The Royal Fleet Auxiliary does not therefore have a distinct, identifiable budget. We do however, maintain the following indicative figures for planning purposes for the costs to FLEET and the Warship Support Agency (WSA).

Direct Running Costs to MOD	*£ million*
FLEET	125
WSA	73
Capital Charges	
FLEET (depreciation and cost of Capital)	116
WSA (depreciation, cost of Capital and stock disposal)	11

Service Personnel (Suicides)

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many personnel in each of the three Services have committed suicide in each of the last three years; how many of those who died served in Iraq; and if he will make a statement. [176110]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 9 June 2004]:* In the period 1 January 2001 to 31 December 2003, there were 39 suicide and open verdict deaths recorded by a coroner (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) or the Procurator Fiscal (Scotland) among UK armed forces personnel. Three of these deaths were among personnel who had served on Operation Telic during the period 10 January 2003 and 20 December 2003 (the latest date for which fully validated Operation Telic deployment data are available). During the period 1 January 2001 to 31 December 2003, there were a further 21 deaths for which we are awaiting a verdict, of which three are for personnel who have served on Operation Telic.

A breakdown of the suicides and open verdict deaths by year of occurrence is given in the following table:

Suicides and open verdict deaths in UK armed forces, 2001–03

Year of death	*Number*	*Number who had served on Operation Telic*
2001	11	n/a
2002	15	n/a
2003	13	3
Total	39	3

n/a = not applicable.

Shipbuilding

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will ensure that the current naval shipbuilding programme is phased to allow stable levels of employment particularly in the key design engineering sector. [175574]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* MOD and DTI officials and representatives from the shipbuilding industry meet on a monthly basis to discuss the future naval shipbuilding programme. These meetings are being taken forward in a positive and constructive manner.

The recent Defence White Paper (Essay 7—Making Defence Industrial Policy Work for the Armed Forces and UK Industry) sets out that the long-term solution to skills shortages in the defence industry involves a stable equipment programme against which future resource requirements can be planned.

We are making particular progress in this sector, where we have commissioned one of the largest programmes of military shipbuilding for many years. In partnership with industry we are comparing our resource requirements against capacity and evaluating the options to reprofile our demand for resources. In this way we can look at ways of avoiding unhelpful peaks and troughs.

UN Operations

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what guidance he has given to British forces in Iraq to ensure that they *(a)* fully abide by international law enforcement standards and *(b)* only use force in line with the principles of necessity and proportionality. [166935]

Mr. Ingram: Training on those aspects of international humanitarian law relevant to law enforcement activities undertaken during operations is provided to personnel on entering the armed forces and refined as appropriate during courses given subsequently in the course of their careers. There are no agreed international law enforcement standards applicable to military forces, but the practices adopted by UK military personnel in Iraq are consistent with the UN Basic Principles for the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials.

All use of force is governed by UK Forces' Rules Of Engagement (ROE). The ROE take into account the UK's obligations under national and international law of which necessity and proportionality are fundamental principles.

HOME DEPARTMENT

All Saints Churchyard, Brightlingsea

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the application to close All Saints Churchyard, Brightlingsea, in Essex. [174272]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 18 May 2004]:* The hon. Member will be aware that the initial application was made on the basis that the churchyard was full. However the results of the recent technical survey have indicated that a limited amount of space is still available for further burials. In line with agreed practice, the application to close All Saints Churchyard does not fall to be considered until this space has been filled.

Asylum and Immigration Applications (Sudan)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* asylum and *(b)* immigration applications he has received from residents of Sudan in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [174832]

Mr. Browne: The available information relating to the number of asylum applications, excluding dependants, that have been received and decisions on applications for an extension of leave to remain or settlement from nationals of Sudan are given in the tables.

Detailed statistics on immigration control are published in the Command Paper "Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom 2002" (cm 6053), obtained from the Library, the Stationery Office and via the Home Office website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/commandpubs1.html.

Information on asylum applications is published in quarterly web pages and in the annual statistical bulletin 'Asylum Statistics United Kingdom'. Copies of these publications and others relating to general immigration to the UK are available from the Library and from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Applications[1] received for asylum in the United Kingdom, excluding dependants, Sudan, 1999 to 2003

	Number of principal applicants
1999[2]	280
2000[2]	415
2001[3]	390
2002[4]	655
2003[4]	930

[1] Figures rounded to the nearest 5.
[2] May exclude some cases lodged at Local Enforcement Offices between January 1999 and March 2000.
[3] Provisional figures.
[4] Revised figures.

Grants and refusals on applications for leave to remain[1] or settlement from nationals of Sudan, 1998–2002

	Number of decisions		
	Total grants of extension	Grants of settlement[2]	Total refusals of extension or settlement
1998	560	220	50
1999	530	270	20
2000	590	810	30
2001	510	280	35
2002	545	210	50

[1] Excludes dependants of principal applicants, asylum related decisions, the outcome of appeals and withdrawn applications.
[2] Excludes "in line" dependants and the outcome of appeals.

Asylum Intake Reduction Sub-committee

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) who the members of the Asylum Intake Reduction sub-committee are; and if he will make a statement; [174386]

(2) if he will publish the minutes of the Asylum Intake Reduction sub-committee; and if he will make a statement; [174387]

(3) on what dates the Asylum Intake Reduction sub-committee has met; and if he will make a statement. [174389]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 20 May 2004]:* The Asylum Intake Reduction/Secure Borders sub-programme board is one of several sub-programme boards designed to assist and oversee delivery of the Public Service Agreement on Asylum and Immigration which is jointly owned by the Home Office and the Department for Constitutional Affairs. The sub-programme boards report to a Joint Programme Board. The Asylum Intake Reduction/Secure Borders sub-programme board is chaired by the Senior Director, Operations of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate. The members are relevant senior officials from the Immigration and Nationality Directorate, the Department for Constitutional Affairs and UKvisas.

The sub-programme board meets monthly. Its minutes contain strategic information in relation to border security and the deployment of resources which is internal to the Government and is not appropriate for wider circulation. Publication of the minutes could harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion and essential policy analysis as detailed in part 2, section 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Asylum Seekers

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his policy is on returning failed asylum seekers to Iraq. [174079]

Mr. Browne: We seek to remove all failed asylum seekers and illegal immigrants wherever possible. All asylum and human rights claims are considered on their individual merits in accordance with our obligations under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Should a claim be refused and any appeal before the independent Immigration Appellant Authority be unsuccessful, it means for that individual it is safe to return.

We have reached agreement with the Coalition Provisional Authority to begin enforced returns to Iraq. We are working to finalise the practicalities of the enforced return programme, which we will implement as soon as the necessary arrangements are in place.

In addition since July last year the Home Office has been facilitating, without incident, the return of small numbers of Iraqi citizens who want to return home through the Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programme operated on our behalf by the International Organisation for Migration.

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his latest estimate is of the number of asylum seekers who have failed the appeal process *(a)* in the UK and *(b)* in Leeds. [174247]

Mr. Browne: The information requested is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Information on asylum appeals are published quarterly, copies of these publications and others relating to general immigration to the UK are available from the Library and from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Bichard Inquiry

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Bichard Inquiry is expected to report. [172956]

Paul Goggins: Sir Michael Bichard has indicated that he intends to deliver his final report to my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary in June. It will be published as soon as possible.

Bribery/Corruption

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many mutual legal assistance requests have been made to other jurisdictions with respect to allegations of overseas bribery; to which jurisdictions; and on what dates. [174029]

Caroline Flint: The United Kingdom is committed to assist its international partners in the fight against bribery and corruption and has signed the UN Convention Against Corruption. The UK Central Authority (UKCA) in the Home Office has processed a number of cases related to this area of criminality.

However, the more detailed statistics sought by the hon member are not available as UKCA does not currently collate them in a manner that can produce data according to offence type.

Cannabis Seeds

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will list the purposes for which cultivation of cannabis seeds is licensed by his Department; [174242]

(2) if he will make it his policy to require purchasers of cannabis seeds only to cultivate such seeds for lawful, licensable purposes; and if he will make a statement; [174243]

(3) if he will describe the licensing regime for the cultivation of cannabis seeds. [174244]

Caroline Flint: The seeds of the cannabis plant are not subject to control under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. The possession, sale and the use of the seeds for culinary and similar purposes are therefore not subject to restriction. This follows the provisions of international law—UN Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961—on which our law is based. The Convention specifically exempts cultivation of cannabis seed production which is classed as an industrial purpose.

It is not considered practicable or desirable to bring the seeds or their users under control. The protection afforded by Section 6 of the Act which prohibits cannabis cultivation without a licence is deemed sufficient. Such unlawful production would be a criminal offence the maximum penalty for which is fourteen years imprisonment.

In common with certain other substances controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, cannabis is subject to designation under Section 7. The effect of this in relation to cultivation is to restrict licensing to activities connected with research or other special purposes. Such research can be either medical or scientific. Cultivation is subject to security conditions assessed on the basis of the individual circumstances and to record keeping requirements. The research has to be recognised as serious by the medical or scientific communities.

The only other special purpose of any significance where licensing has been permitted is the cultivation of cannabis for the production of industrial hemp (used in animal bedding, specialised building products and other materials). In this case only cannabis seeds of a very low psycho-active content are used (as prescribed under EU regulation). Otherwise the only other activities which have been acknowledged as special are cultivation for seed production and education where cultivation has been used in illustrating the long history of the use of hemp products.

Criminal Records Bureau

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what representations he has received on assistance to small voluntary organisations with obtaining Criminal Records Bureau checks on volunteers; and if he will make a statement; [174667]

(2) what assessment he has made of the effect on small voluntary organisations of delays in obtaining Criminal Records Bureau checks on volunteers; and if he will make a statement. [174669]

Ms Blears: The Department has received a range of representations from the voluntary sector. We encourage dialogue with voluntary organisations in order to address issues relevant to the sector—both through the Voluntary and Community Service Working Group, which regularly brings together representatives of a variety of interests, and other standing consultative bodies; and on other, ad hoc, occasions. Currently, the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) is reviewing the network of umbrella registered bodies through which smaller organisations may submit applications, in order to ensure that coverage is sufficient to meet the need. We are anxious also to continue to pursue discussions with the sector about other, cost-effective, means by which voluntary organisations might access the CRB.

Specific information is not available about the length of time the CRB takes to process applications from voluntary organisations. It is the normal practice of the CRB to process applications on a chronological basis, according to date of receipt, irrespective of the sector. Information is routinely collected about the CRB's overall performance against its service standards. Since June 2003, the CRB has been issuing on average 93 per cent. of all Standard and Enhanced Disclosures within two and four weeks respectively, against published service standards of 90 per cent. The CRB's aim is constantly to strive to make further improvements to the service that it provides.

Dangerous Driving

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been prosecuted in each of the last 10 years for driving *(a)* under age, *(b)* without a licence, *(c)* while excluded and *(d)* without insurance. [169070]

Paul Goggins: The information requested is contained in the table:

Number of persons[1] proceeded against for certain motoring offences, England and Wales 1993–2002

	Driving or causing or permitting another person to drive other than in accordance with a licence[2]	*Driving while disqualified from holding or obtaining a licence*	*Using a motor vehicle uninsured against third party risks*
1993	23,482	26,125	265,549
1994	23,362	27,284	258,709
1995	22,886	27,698	265,598
1996	22,640	26,186	247,113
1997	24,004	26,135	236,616
1998	24,159	26,980	232,862

Number of persons[1] proceeded against for certain motoring offences, England and Wales 1993–2002

	Driving or causing or permitting another person to drive other than in accordance with a licence[2]	*Driving while disqualified from holding or obtaining a licence*	*Using a motor vehicle uninsured against third party risks*
1999	23,202	28,401	226,021
2000[3]	24,421	28,714	228,329
2001	24,599	31,130	227,570
2002	24,338	33,388	242,188

[1] Data are on the principal offence basis and exclude companies, local authorities etc.
[2] Includes offences of driving under age and without licence.
[3] Excludes Staffordshire.

Offences of driving under age and without a licence are included along with other similar offences in the group 'Driving, or causing or permitting another person to drive other than in accordance with a licence' and cannot be separately identified. Statistics on court proceedings for 2003 will be published in the autumn.

Date Rape Drugs

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will list the *(a)* types and *(b)* effects of date rape drugs; [174467]

(2) what advice he has given to *(a)* police forces and *(b)* club operators on date rape drugs; [174468]

(3) what research his Department has *(a)* conducted and *(b)* commissioned on the illegal use of date rape drugs; and if he will make a statement. [174471]

Caroline Flint: We take the issue of drug assisted sexual assault and allegations of it very seriously. Penalties for this crime were recently increased in the Sexual Offences Act 2003 to a maximum of 10 years. It is an offence to administer a stupefying substance with the intent of overpowering the victim to engage him or her in sexual activity.

There are potentially very many drugs. Any drug that causes a degree of sedation could potentially be used in a case of 'drug rape'. Drugs which are currently tested for by the Forensic Science Service where 'drug rape' is alleged include: Gammahydroxybutyrate (or GHB) and the benzodiazepine family of drugs such as temazepam and flunitrazepam (Rohypnol). The sedative effects of drugs are likely to be increased when mixed with alcohol.

This issue is one where there is much public concern with very little evidence of the prevalence of the crime. An average 450 allegations of this type are investigated by the Forensic Science Service annually. Of these only between 1 and 2 per cent. show any sign of an unexplained sedative drug.

It is important that any allegation of sexual assault is investigated and the victim is supported by appropriate services whether or not drugs are involved.

An Action Plan was launched in July 2002 to implement the recommendations of the HMCPSI/HMIC joint investigation into the investigation and prosecution of cases involving allegations of rape. This includes 'drug rape' and work with the Association of Chief Police Officers has seen improved guidance to the police. This includes a joint police and Crown Prosecution Service training package and the Joint Operational Police Instructions (JOPI) which were published in June 2003. The "Core Investigative Doctrine" and the "Sexual Offences Investigation Manual of Guidance" are also currently being updated by Centrex.

The Safer Clubbing Guidance is to be updated later this year and will specifically contain guidance on the prevention of, and provision of information on, drug assisted sexual assault. This guidance is distributed to licensed premises, the police, licensing authorities and the local authority via Drug Action Teams.

Deepcut Barracks

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many potential witnesses were *(a)* contacted and *(b)* interviewed by MoD police detective constables seconded to the Surrey police for the duration of the investigations into deaths at Deepcut Army barracks. [174753]

Ms Blears: Surrey police informs me that two Ministry of Defence police officers seconded to Surrey police undertook a range of tasks, which included contacting and interviewing witnesses. Surrey police also informs me that it is unable to identify the numbers involved without incurring a disproportionate cost.

Deportee Prisoners

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many deportees remained in English prisons after completing their sentences for a period of more than three months on the most recent date for which information is available. [174841]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* Information on the number of people who were detained in Prison establishments awaiting deportation after completion of a criminal sentence is not available.

Work is ongoing to improve the quality of data held on those people detained under Immigration Act powers in Prison Service establishments.

Domestic Violence

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women have been convicted of domestic violence during the last 12 months for which figures are available. [174491]

Paul Goggins: Offences involving domestic violence are not identifiable on the Home Office Court Proceedings database as no specific statute covers such offences.

Prosecutions brought might range from common assault to homicide depending on the level of violence, and as the circumstances of the offences for which prosecutions are brought are not collected centrally, offences involving domestic violence cannot be distinguished from other offences within these categories.

Dr. Harold Shipman

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 29 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1298W, on Dr. Harold Shipman, whether the entire body was disposed of; who authorised the disposal; what method was used for disposal; and if he will make a statement. [171993]

Paul Goggins: The body of Harold Shipman has been released to his family by the coroner. Once a coroner's inquiries have been completed and the release authorised, the decision on disposal is a private matter for the family of the deceased.

Guantanamo Bay

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 24 May, *Official Report*, column 1413W, on Guantanamo Bay, on how many occasions officers carrying out interviews informed the relevant authorities of complaints made by detainees alleging treatment by US forces contrary to the terms of the Geneva Convention. [176845]

Mr. Blunkett *[Holding answer 7 June, 2004]:* Some of the detainees questioned by UK intelligence personnel have complained about their treatment in detention. All complaints made by detainees interviewed by British Intelligence officers were passed onto the US authorities, who are responsible for the treatment of those detained in Guantanamo Bay.

Immigration and Nationality Directorate (Staffing)

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff employed in the Immigration and Nationality Directorate have *(a)* resigned and *(b)* requested a transfer to another department in (i) the last six months and (ii) each of the last 10 years. [174384]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 20 May 2004]:* Information on the number of staff requesting a transfer to another department is not available but the number of staff resigning and transferring in each of the last 10 years and the last six months, is contained in the table.

	Resignation	*Transfer to other Government Department*
1994–95	108	13
1995–96	98	12
1996–97	126	15
1997–98	193	23
1998–99	146	33
1999–2000	125	16
2000–01	244	24
2001–02	333	107
2002–03	334	108
2003–04	439	115
1 October 2003–31 March 2004	207	68

Over the period these figures indicate an annual resignation rate of around 3 per cent. which is generally in line with figures for the Civil Service (Civil Service Statistics 2002).

Mayor of London (Meetings)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what dates *(a)* he and *(b)* his predecessor held official meetings with the Mayor of London since July 2000; and what the subject of each meeting was. [171438]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 10 May 2004]:* My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary has regular meetings with the Mayor of London at which issues of mutual concern such as crime, policing and security are discussed.

Metropolitan Police

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many civilians were employed by the Metropolitan police in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by borough; and what percentage of the total of those employed by the Metropolitan police force are civilians. [176712]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* There are no statistics published centrally on the number of police staff at borough level. The total number of police staff (includes community support officers and traffic wardens) in the Metropolitan police on 31 March 2003 was 12,558. This represented 31 per cent. of the total of those employed by the Metropolitan police.

Minors (Heathrow Airport)

Mr. Wilkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many accompanied minors have arrived at London Heathrow Airport in each year from 1997 to 2003 inclusive without a passport or identity documents seeking entry into the UK. [174778]

Mr. Browne: Information on the number of accompanied minors who have arrived at Heathrow Airport without a passport or identity documents seeking entry into the UK is not currently collected.

Mr. Wilkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many unaccompanied minors have arrived at London Heathrow airport in each year from 1997 to 2003 inclusive seeking admission to the UK without the necessary visa or legal entitlement to entry. [174779]

Mr. Browne: Information on the number of unaccompanied minors who have arrived at Heathrow airport seeking admission to the UK without the necessary visa or legal entitlement to entry is not currently collected.

The results of Operation Paladin Child on unaccompanied children arriving at Heathrow airport were announced on 17 May. This operation ran between August 2003-November 2003 and was initiated by the Metropolitan Police Child Protection Command, with the co-operation of the Immigration Service, NSPCC and Hillingdon Social Services.

In total 1,738 unaccompanied minors were granted leave to enter in the three month study of whom 30 per cent. were risk assessed and referred to social services. The operation was a valuable exercise in determining the nature of child migration to the UK and has not uncovered evidence of child trafficking at Heathrow.

Mr. Wilkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many unaccompanied minors have arrived at London Heathrow airport in each year from 1997 to 2003 inclusive seeking refugee status in the UK. [174780]

Mr. Browne: Data on the number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children that arrive at specific ports of entry are not collated centrally (additionally some unaccompanied minors may arrive in the UK and subsequently apply for asylum in country). This information could therefore be obtained only from individual case files at disproportionate cost.

The table presents data on asylum applications from unaccompanied children broken down by year and location of application.

Unaccompanied[1,2,3] children, aged 17 or under, applying for asylum in the United Kingdom, 1997 to 2003.

	Total	*Applied at port*	*Applied in country*
1997[4]	1,100	670	430
1998[4]	3,035	1,085	1,955
1999[4]	3,350	1,500	1,850
2000[4]	2,735	1,395	1,340
2001[4]	3,470	1,645	1,820
2002[5,6]	6,200	1,240	4,955
2003[5,6]	2,800	555	2,245

[1] Figures rounded to the nearest 5.

[2] Unaccompanied at point of arrival, aged (or if no proof) determined to be 17 or under and not known to be joining a relative or guardian in the United Kingdom.

[3] Figures exclude disputed age cases.

[4] May excluded some cases lodged at Local Enforcement Offices.

[5] Not comparable with manual counts data prior to 2002.

[6] Provisional figures.

Information on applications from unaccompanied asylum seeking children and other asylum statistics are published in quarterly web pages and in the annual statistical bulletin Asylum Statistics United Kingdom. Copies of these publications and others relating to general immigration to the UK are available from the Library of the House and from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

New Hall Prison

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many girls aged under 18 were in custody at New Hall Prison on each *(a)* visit date and *(b)* publication date relating to the Chief Inspector of Prisons' recent report. [172614]

Paul Goggins: During the inspection by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons at New Hall prison between 10 and 14 November 2003, the number of juveniles held on F wing was as follows. (Note: these numbers include all those classified as juveniles, i.e. all those serving a Detention and Training Order, any remanded young women under 18 and all section 91s):

10 November 2003—42

11 November 2003—43

12 November 2003—43

13 November 2003—43

14 November 2003—42.

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many women prisoners were mentally ill during their detention in New Hall women's prison during *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004. [172652]

Paul Goggins: The available data for New Hall cover the period from 12 May 2003 to 26 April 2004. During that time there were 709 referrals for mental health assessments. Of these, 29 were diagnosed as having a "severe and enduring mental health problem" of a sort which generally requires specialist treatment. A further 345 of the referrals involved mental health issues linked to substance misuse and their problems were addressed in a variety of ways: psychology sessions, psychiatric nurse sessions, group and/or specialist sessions such as anger management, self-harm management, trauma/abuse counselling.

Parenting Courses

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what provision is available for parenting education courses within the prison system. [174789]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 21 May 2004]:* Most prisons and Young Offender Institutions, and all juvenile establishments, offer courses in family literacy and parenting programmes. These form part of a Social and Life Skills programme which is accredited through the Open College Network. Some establishments also deliver family learning as part of their visits programme.

In addition, many parenting and family relationship courses have been introduced into prisons by voluntary or community-based organisations. We encourage providers to embed literacy and numeracy into these courses so offenders can achieve basic skills qualifications as well as gain important life skills in communications and parenting.

Police

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in full-time police officers in Stoke-on-Trent North has been since 1997. [177645]

Ms Blears: Information on strength at Basic Command Unit (BCU) level is collected annually and reflects the position at the end of March. Information on BCU strength is only available from 2002.

The Stoke-on-Trent North constituency is part of the Stoke-on-Trent Basic Command Unit (BCU). In March 2002 Stoke-on-Trent Division was 365 officers. The force has not provided any BCU data for March 2003. The deployment of officers to BCUs is a matter for the Chief Constable (John Giffard) and within the Stoke-on-Trent BCU deployment of officers is a matter for the Divisional Commander.

At the end of December 2003 Staffordshire police had record strength of 2,253, which is 42 more officers than in March 1997.

Prison Governors

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prison Governors in England and Wales are women; and if he will list the prisons. [174492]

Paul Goggins: There are 33 female senior operational managers in charge of Public Sector Prison Service establishments in England and Wales out of a total of 128 establishments. The establishments concerned are:

Establishments with Female Senior Operational Managers in Charge

Askham Grange
Blundeston
Brockhill
Buckley Hall
Bullingdon
Canterbury
Dartmoor
Dover
Everthorpe
Ford
Foston Hall
Haslar
Haverigg
Hewell Grange
Highdown
Edmunds Hill
Hindley
Huntercombe
Lancaster Farms
Lincoln
Littlehey
Liverpool
Maidstone
Moorland
New Hall
Onley
Rochester
Stafford
Stocken
Thorn Cross
Weare
Whatton
Winchester

Prisoners

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many and what percentage of prisoners *(a)* were dyslexic, *(b)* autistic and *(c)* had eating disorders on the latest date for which figures are available. [174960]

Paul Goggins: Information is not collected centrally about the number and percentage of prisoners who are dyslexic, autistic or have eating disorders. Past research suggests that the proportion of prisoners suffering from dyslexia could range from four to over 17 per cent. A new prison dyslexia project, currently under way in Yorkshire and Humberside, is designed to provide an authoritative answer to the question of the incidence of dyslexia and related learning disabilities among the prison population. This report is expected at the end of the summer.

In a survey of mental ill health in the prison population undertaken by the Office for National Statistics in 1997, 6 per cent. of women prisoners reported having been diagnosed at some time in their lives with anorexia and 14 per cent. with bulimia.

It is possible that Autistic Spectrum Disorders among the prison population may be under-diagnosed. The Prison Service, Prison Health and the Youth Justice Board have jointly appointed a Programme Manager for Juvenile Health. This appointment is expected to lead, among other things, to a greater understanding of the nature and prevalence of all conditions—including autism—in the juvenile population. This in turn should lead to better diagnosis and assessment in individual cases and improved commissioning of appropriate services.

Prisons

John Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many basic skills *(a)* entry level, *(b)* level 2 and *(c)* level 3 places are available to prisoners at each (i) Prison Service establishment and (ii) privately run establishment. [174289]

Paul Goggins: We do not record this level of detail centrally. The number of basic skills places available to prisoners at entry level, level 1 and level 2 is informed by need, which is identified at induction and initial assessment. Each establishment is required to meet challenging targets at each of these levels. We are providing more money for prisons this year in order to generate additional capacity. The overall target for 2003–04 and 2004–05 and achievement for 2003–04 are given in the table.

	Target	*Achievement*
2003–04[1]	36,631 (all levels) *of which:*	46,517 (127%) *of which:*
	7,749 (entry)	13,431
	14,462 (level 1)	18,905
	14,420 (level 2)	14,181
2004–05	56,000 (all levels) *of which:*	
	16,970 (entry)	
	23,430 (level 1)	
	15,600 (level 2)	

[1] Provisional

Level 2 is equivalent to a GCSE grade A*-D. Prisoners have the opportunity to progress to higher levels through distance learning, for example through the Open University.

John Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the Prison Service definition is of purposeful activity for prisoners. [174343]

Paul Goggins: The purposeful activity measure is made up of 29 categories of activity undertaken by prisoners broadly comprising work, education, training, programmes to tackle offending behaviour, resettlement

activity and physical education. Prisons report the total weekly purposeful activity hours they deliver by these categories of activity.

The following table shows a fuller description of all the activities that are drawn together to constitute the overall purposeful activity measure:

Purposeful activities

Activity group	*Activities include:*
Education	
Induction assessment	Basic skills screening assessments
Basic and Key Skills up to Level 2	All education categories can include private study or 'homework' by prisoners where this can be validated and an audit trail maintained
Education leading to accreditation	Education activity where prisoners are working towards a recognised qualification (but excluding education leading to basic skills qualifications categorised above)
Skills training leading to recognised national accreditation	Vocational construction and industrial training courses, e.g. industrial cleaning, catering, motor mechanics, office skills, hairdressing, painting, construction, electrical
Physical education	PE where physical education officers teach and supervise prisoners
Other education	Not categorised elsewhere, including library use of more than 30 minutes
Work	
Prison maintenance work	Support to works and maintenance staff around the prison
Wing cleaning work	Cleaning work on wings
Other prison cleaning and orderly work	Cleaning and orderly work around the prison other than on domestic wings
Industries/production workshops (PES Workshops on Regime Monitoring system)	Employment in production or industrial workshops such as textiles tailors, laundries, plastics, woodwork contract services etc. (Any workshop that is predominately production based)
Agricultural business	Employment in prison farms, market gardens
Gardens amenity	Employment on prison gardens
Kitchen	Preparation or serving of food in prison kitchens, hotplate/serveries or messes
Other occupations	Employment not categorised elsewhere (e.g. clothing exchange store workers, administrative clerks, barbers, paid community work)
Resettlement	
Induction	Prison induction courses
Maintaining safe and secure environment	Primary objective of activity relates to institutional behaviour, e.g. suicide awareness, anti-bullying
Sentence planning, parole interviews, other assessments with the prisoner not categorised elsewhere	Activity to define the composition of prisoner regimes
Accredited Offending Behaviour Programmes (OBPs)	KPI accredited courses
Non accredited OBPs	Any other programmes not categorised elsewhere
Tackling substance abuse	Interviews, assessments, individual or grouped drug or alcohol programmes, including CARATS assessments
IDPR	Inmate Development and Pre-Release training
Other resettlement and offending behaviour activity not covered	Probation, personal officer, PLU officer work. Job club and other employment advice. Accommodation advice or information. Specialist work, including probation or CAB
Family, social	Visits, earned community visits, compassionate licence
Temporary release on resettlement licence	Count up to eight hours per day if the time has not been categorised elsewhere
Other purposeful activities	
Health education clinics and promotion	Including, for example, well-man clinics and cancer awareness sessions but excluding medical treatment
Voluntary work	Including sessions with external agencies not covered elsewhere
Other facility licence not covered elsewhere	
Chaplaincy	All faith religious activities including services, classes, pastoral visits and organised prayers
Recreational sporting activities	Activities organised in addition to the establishment PE programme and supervised by non-PE staff

John Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people are employed and by whom in the delivery of Counselling Assessment, Referral, Advice and Through-care services in each *(a)* Prison Service establishment and *(b)* privately run establishment. [174345]

Paul Goggins: Information on the number of counselling, assessment, referral, advice and throughcare service (CARATs) workers is not collected routinely and may be subject to change. A table showing a survey of prisons conducted in January 2004 has been placed in the Library.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many Northern Irish prisoners held in prisons in England and Wales have been transferred to prisons in Northern Ireland in each of the last three years. [174487]

Paul Goggins: In 2001, 18 prisoners were transferred from prisons in England and Wales to prisons in Northern Ireland; 10 prisoners were transferred in 2002. Because of population pressures in Northern Ireland only one prisoner was transferred in 2003. Nevertheless, applications are processed in the normal way and prisoners are transferred when a space becomes available.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the open prisons in England and Wales for *(a)* males inmates and *(b)* female inmates. [174489]

Paul Goggins: The following prisons in England and Wales had open units for male inmates on 31 March 2004; Ford, Grendon/Spring Hill, Hewell Grange, Hollesley Bay, Kirkham, Leyhill, Moorland Open, North Sea Camp, Standford Hill, Sudbury, Thorn Cross, Usk/Prescoed and Wealstun.

The following prisons in England and Wales had open units for female inmates on 31 March 2004; Askham Grange and East Sutton Park.

Probation Hostels

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of places in probation hostels in England and Wales were occupied by persons on bail in *(a)* 1991 and *(b)* 2003. [172269]

Paul Goggins: A report published by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation in 1993, "Approved Probation and Bail Hostels—Report of a Thematic Inspection" confirmed that of the population resident in approved hostels during 1991–92:

69 per cent. were on bail

25 per cent. were on probation

6 per cent. were under supervision on release from custody.

No published data are yet available on the percentage of places in approved probation and bail hostels (approved premises) in England and Wales occupied by persons on bail in 2003.

Racial Harassment (Manchester)

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many times powers preventing racial harassment introduced since 1997 have been used in Manchester, Central. [174278]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 20 May 2004]:* Figures for the number of prosecutions in Manchester, Central for this type of offence are not centrally available. Greater Manchester police figures for harassment offences (published by the Home Office under the requirements of S95 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991) show a total of 2,075 recorded offences of this type in the Greater Manchester police area over the period 1999–2000 to 2001–02.

Recidivism

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of detention and training orders in preventing recidivism among young offenders. [172297]

Paul Goggins: The Detention and Training Order (DTO) has been the main custodial sentence for young people aged 12 to 17 since April 2000.

The first two years' operation of the DTO was the subject of research commissioned by the Youth Justice Board. This found some signs that supervisors were playing a very significant role in getting young offenders to address their offending behaviour. It is too early to assess the overall effectiveness of the sentence in preventing recidivism but we do expect shortly to be able to publish the first national reconviction figures.

RESPECT and the National Black Police Association

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much public funding *(a)* went last year and *(b)* will go (i) this year and (ii) next year to (A) RESPECT in the Prison Service and (B) the National Black Police Association; and if he will make a statement. [175050]

Paul Goggins: The information requested is as follows:

(A) *Funding for RESPECT*

During 2003–04, the RESPECT Network received £453,000 from the Prison Service. For 2004–05, the Network have forecast a spend of £400,000. RESPECT'S funding request for 2005–06 has not yet been submitted.

(B) *Funding for the National Black Police Association*

For 2003–04, the Home Office provided grant in aid of £81,214 and funding of nearly £40,000 for one member of staff employed by the National Black Police Association (NBPA). The NBPA's funding request for 2004–05 is currently under consideration. Funding for 2005–06 will be considered at the end of this financial year.

RESPECT has proven to be a valuable support network for its members throughout the Prison Service. Encouragingly, the Network now has 3,663 members and provides a free-phone support line with trained volunteers drawn from its membership which provides an additional source of support to any member of staff who may have been a victim of racism.

The National Black Police Association plays an important role in helping the Police Service become more aware of the various issues facing black officers and to recruit, retain and progress more minority ethnic officers. Through its links with communities, it also helps increase trust and confidence of those communities in the Police Service.

Section 44 Funding

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the racial equality councils that have been *(a)* successful and *(b)* unsuccessful in securing section 44 funding; and which racial equality councils cover areas in which British National Party candidates are standing in this year's local government elections. [174770]

Fiona Mactaggart: For the lists of successful and unsuccessful applications, I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave my hon. Friend the Member for Bolton, South-East (Dr. Iddon) on 18 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 862W.

The Commission for Racial Equality is collating the other information requested and I have asked its chair to write to my hon. Friend on this matter as soon as possible.

Secure Estate (Wales)

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many children from *(a)* England, *(b)* Scotland, *(c)* Northern Ireland and *(d)* Wales reside in the secure estate in Wales. [171994]

Paul Goggins: On 6 May 2004, there were 26 young people from Wales and two from England in the juvenile secure estate in Wales. There were none from Scotland or Northern Ireland.

Surrey Police Service

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the future role of the Surrey police service in undertaking the coroner's assistant duty; and what estimate he has made of the annual *(a)* cost to the Surrey police service of undertaking the coroner's assistant duty and *(b)* number of hours that Surrey police spend on coroner's assistant duties. [174754]

Paul Goggins: As announced in "Reforming the Coroner and Death Certification Service, a Position Paper", which we published on 1 March, we propose that the existing responsibility undertaken by the police in Surrey and elsewhere to provide officers to support coroners should in future be transferred to a new national coroner service. Meanwhile, the agreement is that the present levels of staffing and support are to be maintained.

I understand from Surrey police that they have 12 staff working 20,000 hours a year on coroner's officer duties. The annual cost is around £355,000.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Housing Transfers

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his estimate is of the asset value of council housing stock transferred to registered social landlords in each of the last three years. [177005]

Keith Hill: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. The value of a housing transfer is through its tenanted market value rather than on an asset basis. The tenanted market value reflects the income the Registered Social Landlord is likely to receive less the estimated expenditure necessary on repair and improvement works, maintenance and supervision and management over a 30-year period.

New Deal for Communities

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* job title and *(b)* annual salary is of each employee of each New Deal for Communities partnership. [160344]

Yvette Cooper: A list of job titles and the total number of staff falling within salary bands from £0 to £10,000 upwards has been made available in the Library of the House. A few partnerships have declined to give this information for data protection reasons.

The staff listed are funded through management and administration budgets. Overall, partnerships may only spend up to 10 per cent. of their 10-year budget total on management and administration during the life of their programme.

Some partnerships run schemes and projects internally and so have higher staffing numbers. Other NDC partnerships contract out work to external people/organisations and in consequence their staffing numbers are lower.

Planning (Crime and Disorder Assessments)

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when crime and disorder impact assessments under planning regulations will begin. [177728]

Keith Hill: There is no statutory requirement for each planning application to be accompanied by a crime and disorder impact assessment. However, such an assessment is encouraged in "Safer Places: the Planning System and crime prevention", which was published on 26 April. This good practice guidance, which will accompany the forthcoming Planning Policy Statement 1, provides advice on effective methods of implementing crime prevention measures and securing community safety through the planning system.

Rough Sleepers

Tom Brake: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate his Department has made of the number of rough sleepers in *(a)* London and *(b)* England for each year since 1997. [177053]

Yvette Cooper: Figures on the number of rough sleepers are not available for 1997. The following table shows the year on year progress made since 1998, when the baseline figure against which the Rough Sleepers Unit's target for reducing rough sleepers was set.

	London	*Rest of England*	*Total*	*Overall reduction (percentage)*
June 1998	621	1,230	1,851	—
June 1999	635	998	1,633	11.8
June 2000	546	634	1,180	36.3
June 2001	357	346	703	62.0
November 2001	264	268	532	71.3
June 2002	321	275	596	67.8
June 2003	267	237	504	72.8

On 3 December 2001, my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister announced that the target to reduce rough sleeping by at least two thirds from the baseline estimate had been met. This two-third reduction in rough sleeping has not only been sustained, but has been reduced further.

The Homelessness and Housing Support Directorate within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will continue to work closely with local authorities, voluntary sector agencies and others in sustaining the reduction.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Aquaculture

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received from Norwegian companies and operators engaged in aquaculture in the UK as to the continued viability of their operations in the UK; and if she will make a statement. [176627]

Mr. Bradshaw: None.

Bananas

Mr. Foulkes: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what pressure the Department has brought to seek a positive outcome in the World Trade Organisation discussions on bananas in order to protect Caribbean banana producers. [176077]

Alun Michael: As part of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) settlement with the USA and Ecuador reached in 2001, the EU is committed to the removal of quota restrictions on banana imports by the end of 2005. Further WTO negotiations will be needed to determine how the existing quotas are converted into tariffs.

The UK recognises the importance of the banana trade to African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) exporters. We firmly believe that the inevitable changes to the banana regime must be phased at a rate that allows their economies to adjust.

Defra and European Commission officials met earlier this year to discuss the matter. Further representations will be made as necessary when the Commission seeks a mandate from member states for proposals on a tariff-only import regime to submit to the WTO.

As a separate issue, the existing waiver under WTO rules allowing the EU to provide tariff preferences for the ACP countries expires in 2007 and is to be replaced by the development of Economic Partnership Agreements. The terms for these are currently under negotiation. The UK is taking a close interest.

Dog Ownership

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will assess the merits of introducing a life ban on dog ownership for people convicted of serious cruelty to dogs; and if she will make a statement. [176769]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* Under the proposed Animal Welfare Bill we are considering the penalties which are available to the courts. We are also looking at ways of ensuring that an order banning a convicted person from keeping animals is effective and cannot be circumvented.

Farm Subsidies

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farms in *(a)* England, *(b)* Scotland, *(c)* Wales and *(d)* Northern Ireland received agricultural support payments collectively totalling more than (i) 500,000, (ii) 1 million and (iii) 1.5 million euros in the most recent year for which records are available. [172482]

Alun Michael: The number of farms in England receiving agricultural support payments collectively totalling more than 500,000, 1 million and 1.5 million euros are set out in the table. These figures have been taken from European Agriculture Guidance and Guarantee Fund 2003 financial year (16 October 2002 to 15 October 2003).

The information for other countries within the UK is a matter for their devolved Assemblies.

Euros[1]	*Number of farms*
More than 500,000	78
More than 1 million	10
More than 1.5 million	12

[1] The records are recorded in sterling. An exchange rate of 0.652 euros to the £ was used to convert the sterling values.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many and what proportion of farms in *(a)* England, *(b)* Scotland, *(c)* Wales and *(d)* Northern Ireland received total agricultural production subsidy payments exceeding (i) 50,000, (ii) 75,000, (iii) 100,000, (iv) 125,000, (v) 150,000, (vi) 175,000, (vii) 200,000, (viii) 250,000 and (ix) 300,000 euros for the most recent year for which records are available. [172483]

Alun Michael: The number and proportion of farms in England receiving agricultural production subsidy payments is broken down into the requested bands in the following table. These figures have been taken from European Agriculture Guidance and Guarantee Fund 2003 financial year (16 October 2002 to 15 October 2003).

The information for other countries within the UK is a matter for their devolved Assemblies.

Euros[1]	*Number of farms*	*Proportion (percentage)*
Exceeding 50,000	3,564	2.90
Exceeding 75,000	1,854	1.51
Exceeding 100,000	980	0.80
Exceeding 125,000	610	0.50
Exceeding 150,000	381	0.31
Exceeding 175,000	251	0.20
Exceeding 200,000	243	0.20
Exceeding 250,000	117	0.10
Exceeding 300,000	199	0.16

[1] The records are recorded in sterling. An exchange rate of 0.652 euros to the £ was used to convert the sterling values.

Flora and Fauna Extinctions

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate her Department has made of the number of species of *(a)* plants and *(b)* animals that have become extinct in the UK in the last 25 years. [165260]

Mr. Bradshaw: By its very nature, extinction is very difficult to demonstrate. However, based on available information, five species of plants (one of which has been reintroduced) and eight species of animals (including four species of invertebrates) appear to have become extinct in the United Kingdom during the last 25 years.

NIREX

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will set out the reasons for the delay in announcing the future responsibilities of Nirex. [177228]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* The Government are considering the best means of making Nirex independent of industry and subject to greater Government control, as we announced in July 2003. The options for this need to be considered and discussed with Nirex itself and its industry shareholders. The Government will announce the outcome of the Nirex review once it has been completed.

Pesticides

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many and what percentage of approved pesticides in the United Kingdom are known to use possible *(a)* carcinogens, *(b)* mutagens and *(c)* allergens. [177434]

Alun Michael: It is not possible for me to provide information on the number of pesticides classified as carcinogens or mutagens because this information is not held centrally and to attempt to provide it would incur disproportionate costs.

There are approximately 500 out of a total of 3,849 approved pesticide products that are classified as "skin sensitizers". These products are only approved for sale to professional users and carry a requirement to use protective equipment to reduce skin contact when handling the product.

Pigswill

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which membership-based organisations responded to the consultation document that preceded the ban on swill feeding to pigs; and if she will summarise their responses. [175796]

Mr. Bradshaw: A copy of the list of the membership-based organisations that responded to the consultation document and relevant summaries of their responses has been placed in the Library of the House.

Protected Bird Species

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which protected species of bird may be taken under licence in England; how many licences were issued by her Department in the last two years to take protected bird species, broken down by *(a)* species and *(b)* the number of birds taken under each licence; and what (i) the location where the action can take place and (ii) the reason why each licence was issued in each case. [176836]

Mr. Bradshaw: All species of wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, however section 16 of the Act gives powers to the Secretary of State to issue licences which may be, to any degree, general or specific, subject to there being no satisfactory alternative.

The Department compiles derogation reports under the European Community Directive on the Conservation of Birds (79/409/EEC) on an annual basis for the United Kingdom. The report details the species, the number of licences issued, the purpose or reason for each licence issued in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland by Government Departments and agencies.

Reports for the calendar years, 2001 and 2002 are publicly available documents and have been lodged with the House Libraries. The report for 2003 is currently being compiled and will be made available as soon as it has been completed and submitted to the European Commission.

The reports do not record details of the location where the action has taken place in view of concerns for confidentiality and identifying individuals' residence.

Waste Disposal

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether it is Government policy that the disposal of all *(a)* intermediate-level waste and *(b)* high-level waste should be the responsibility of Nirex. [177227]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* Government have established the independent Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM) to recommend the best form of long-term management for the UK's higher activity radioactive waste. Government will decide policy for such management, and the means by which it is to be delivered, in light of CoRWM's recommendations.

Water Voles

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action she intends to take to extend full protection to the water vole under section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). [173945]

Mr. Bradshaw: Every five years the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) advises Government on which animals should be legally protected by listing on Schedule 5 (not schedule 9) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. JNCC reported to Government with its recommendations in September 2002, which included full protection for this species. The next stage is for Government to conduct a public consultation based on these recommendations. This will take place in June 2004.

Following this consultation, the Secretary of State will decide on the changes to be made to the schedules and these will be implemented by Statutory Instrument.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Afghanistan

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate he has made of the tonnage of the forthcoming opium harvest in Afghanistan. [176903]

Mr. Rammell: The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) conducts an annual survey into the level of opium poppy cultivation and production in Afghanistan. The most recent survey, published in October 2003, showed that the level of opium cultivation in 2003 was 80,000 hectares and production was 3,600 tonnes. The UNODC is in the process of assessing the 2004 harvest in conjunction with the Afghan government. Its report will be published in the autumn.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Afghanistan about the reform of the country's criminal justice system. [177112]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office raised this when he visited Afghanistan in May 2004 in the context of tackling drugs crime in Afghanistan.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what resources are provided by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the European Union to reconstruct and rehabilitate detention and prison facilities in Afghanistan. [177115]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Italy leads international assistance for Afghanistan on judicial reform, including penal reform, and Germany leads assistance on reform of the police. Neither the UK nor the European Commission is involved in funding reconstruction or rehabilitation of prison or detention facilities in Afghanistan. We do not have information on projects which may be funded by other countries.

More widely, the UK has since the war in Afghanistan supported Penal Reform International to undertake work on capacity-building within the penal sector, including staff training. The UK has also contributed £1 million to the UN Development Programme (UNDP) programme for judicial reform. The European Commission is working with Italy in the justice sector to help refurbish the district judicial system (courts) and train local staff.

East Timor

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of East Timor about the rights of opposition parties. [177421]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Government have not made any representation to the Government of East Timor about the rights of opposition parties. East Timor is a democratic society with universal suffrage and a multi-party system. The right to establish and participate in political parties is enshrined in East Timor's constitution.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the UK's financial contribution to the Commission on Reception, Truth and Reconciliation in East Timor is. [177428]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The UK contributed £215,847 to the Commission on Reception, Truth and Reconciliation (CAVR) in FY 2003–04. This brings our total contribution to the CAVR since it was established in January 2002 to £580,000.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will urge the United Nations to continue to monitor security in East Timor, with particular reference to the activities of Islamic militant groups operating in the region. [177430]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The UN monitors the security situation in East Timor very closely. In May this year, the UN Mission in Support of East Timor, with a continued peacekeeping element, was extended for a further six months as part of a one-year consolidation phase. This is to ensure that the emerging institutions in East Timor, including the security forces, develop the capacity to maintain security and stability in East Timor.

Iraq

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he was informed of President Bush's plan to demolish Abu Ghraib prison. [177207]

Mr. Rammell: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary was informed on Tuesday 24 May 2004. President Bush announced the US offer, subject to the approval of the Iraqi Government, to fund the construction of a modern maximum security prison in Iraq to replace Abu Ghraib prison, which could then be demolished, or turned into a memorial. The demolition of the prison had been proposed by members of the Iraqi Governing Council earlier in the month. The Foreign Secretary was made aware of this proposal on 13 May when it was reported by our post in Baghdad.

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether British companies have bid for contracts to build prisons in Iraq. [177209]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: British companies are not required to report details to the Government of their bids for contracts for the reconstruction process in Iraq. Nor is there a central organisation that collects and publishes such information.

However, we are aware that Parsons Delaware Inc. US, the winner of the $900 million Program Management Office Design-Build prime contract for work associated with Security and Justice projects, has awarded sub-contracts to Pell Frischmann, a UK consulting engineering company, and TPS Consult, a

UK design engineering company. Some of the work under this prime contract will include the design and construction of prisons.

I am also aware that AMEC, in joint venture with their US partner FLUOR, tendered unsuccessfully for this prime contract.

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the appointees to the Interim Iraqi Government, with their *(a)* designations and *(b)* gender. [177729]

Mr. Rammell: The following is a list of the Iraqi Interim Government—those marked with an asterisk denote female Ministers, who number six in total, including the new post of Minister of State for Women.

President—Sheikh Ghazi al Yawr
Deputy President—Dr. Ibrahim Jaafari
Deputy President—Dr. Rowsch Shaways
Prime Minister—Dr. Iyad Allawi
Deputy Prime Minister—Dr. Barham Salih
Minister for Defence—Hazem Sha'alan
Minister for Interior—Falah al-Nakib
Minister for Finance—Dr. Adel Abdul Mahdi
Minister for Foreign Affairs—Hoshyar Zebari
Minister for Oil—Thamir Ghadban
Minister for Trade—Mohammed al-Jibouri
Minister for Education—Sami Mudhafer
Minister for Planning and Development—Dr. Mehdi al-Hafidh
Minister for Electricity—Dr. Aiham al-Sammarae
*Minister for Agriculture—Dr. Sawsan al-Sharify
Minister for Communications—Dr. Mohammed al-Hakim
Minister for Justice—Dr. Malek Dohan al-Hassan
Minister for Health—Dr. Ala'adin Alwan
Minister for Housing and Construction—Dr Omar al-Damluji
*Minister for Municipalities and Public Works—Nasreen Berwari
Minister for Water Resources—Latif Rashid
Minister for Transportation—Louay Hatem al-Eris
Minister for Industry and Minerals—Dr. Hachem al-Hassani
*Minister for Labour and Social Affairs—Leyla Abdul Latif
Minister for Higher Education—Dr. Taher al-Bakaa
*Minister for Environment—Dr. Mishkat Moumin
Minister for Science and Technology—Rashad Mandan Omar
*Minister for Displacement and Migration—Pascale Isho Warda
Minister for Youth and Sports—Ali Fa'iq al-Ghabban
Minister for Culture—Mufeed al-Jaza'iri
Minister for Human Rights—Baktiar Amin
Minister of State for Provinces—Wael Abdul Latif
*Minister of State for Women—Narmin Othman
Minister of State—Adnan al Janabi
Minister of State—Dr. Qasim Daoud
Minister of State—Dr. Mamu Farman Othman.

NHS

Mr. Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether under the proposed EU constitution the NHS would be subject to competition directives. [176701]

Mr. MacShane: The draft EU Constitutional Treaty will not change the way in which competition rules apply to NHS bodies. Under existing Treaty provisions, competition articles apply only to "undertakings"—persons or bodies engaged in economic activity. This means that whilst the social provision of healthcare is not an economic activity as such, competition rules can apply to NHS bodies when they are involved in "economic activity", for example, when they are contracting out healthcare provision.

Pakistan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the treatment of Christians in Pakistan; and what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Pakistan on the protection of Christians from attack by the Muslim extremists, with particular reference to the case of Javaid Anjum. [177442]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Cases of religious persecution against the Christian population in Pakistan are viewed seriously by the British Government and we make our views on the treatment of religious minorities known to the Government of Pakistan on all possible occasions. On 31 May the EU submitted a demarche to the Pakistani government. This raised specific human rights concerns in Pakistan including the case of Javaid Anjum.

Sudan

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assistance is being provided to the Nuba people from the Africa Conflict Prevention Pool. [173654]

Mr. Mullin: To date, more than £2.8 million has been allocated from the Africa Conflict Prevention Pool towards the security of the Nuba people, through support to the Joint Military Commission International Monitoring Unit responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Nuba Mountains Ceasefire Agreement. The Department for International Development also funds local peace building initiatives and support to basic education in the Nuba Mountains.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Gunpowder Plot

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what plans he has made for the House to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot. [176637]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: Officials of both Houses are planning an exhibition to mark the 400th anniversary of the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot; their proposals were considered and approved by the House of Commons Commission in March this year. The exhibition will be held in Westminster Hall between July and December 2005 and will provide a serious, dispassionate and sensitive introduction to the plot, close to where the events took place. It will seek to raise public interest in parliamentary history, and to increase

engagement with the work of Parliament. It is likely to be one of a number of related activities organised by other institutions in London.

House Staff (Mental Health)

Mr. Goodman: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission how many people have left employment in the House of Commons Service because of *(a)* stress, *(b)* anxiety, *(c)* depression and *(d)* other mental health reasons in each year since 1997. [176217]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: Information on reasons for leaving the House of Commons Service is not collated centrally, and is not available in the form requested. However, some limited information is available for the period 1 June 2002 to 26 May 2004. During this period, out of 549 leavers overall, three members of staff were medically retired on grounds of stress or depression. These cases were not related to the work that was carried out by the employees: two of them were directly linked to an underlying medical condition.

The House operates a full occupational health service, and individuals who may be suffering from stress are referred to them as soon as possible. The details of each case are subject to normal medical confidentiality. The House's welfare officers are also available to help staff who feel under stress.

PRIME MINISTER

British Olympic Hockey Team

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Prime Minister how many members of the British Olympic hockey team of 1988 have received honours. [177726]

The Prime Minister: Three members of the British Olympic hockey team of 1988 have received honours. The captain, Richard Dodds, received the OBE in 1989. Sean Kerly received an MBE in 1993 and Stephen Martin received an MBE in 1994.

Iraq

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Prime Minister what role the British Government will play in helping the Iraqi people to establish security and policing institutions. [176558]

The Prime Minister: The UK has made a significant contribution to the establishment of the Iraqi security forces and as Iraqi capacity and command capability builds, responsibility for security will be progressively handed over.

Over 100 British police officers are involved in training, mentoring and advisory roles with the Iraqi Police Service in Baghdad, across the south of Iraq and at the Jordan International Police Training Academy.

The UK has also made a significant contribution to efforts to establish the new Iraqi armed forces through mentoring and training within the Iraqi armed forces, the Iraqi Ministry of Defence and the Coalition Military Assistance Training Team. The UK is also leading the effort to establish a new Iraqi Coastal Defence Force based out of Umm Qasr to be fully operational by 1 October 2004.

UK forces in Multi National Division (South-East) have raised, trained and equipped five battalions of the Iraqi Civil Defence Corps (ICDC) which are now operational, with a sixth battalion in training.

Post 30 June, the UK will continue to assist in an advisory, training and mentoring role across all areas of Security Sector Reform including the armed forces and the Iraqi Police Service to ensure continued progression in Security Sector Reform.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Blunt: To ask the Prime Minister whether a Harm Test was carried out by the Openness Team on the policy of citing exemptions 2 and 7 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information in not providing information in answer to questions 174254 to 174256, 174258 to 174261, 174311 to 174313 and 174315. [177991]

The Prime Minister: The exemptions were applied on the basis set out in the answers I gave to the hon. Member on 25 May.

Water Action Plan

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Prime Minister what progress in relation to the Water Action Plan agreed at last year's G8 summit in Evian he expects to report at the forthcoming Sea Island summit, with particular reference to the commitment to making political priorities of *(a)* safe drinking water and *(b)* basic sanitation. [177483]

The Prime Minister: The UK agreed a Water Action Plan in March 2004 which supports the implementation of the G8 Water Action Plan to deliver safe drinking water and better sanitation.

We are supporting countries who are committed to making safe drinking water and basic sanitation a priority through international programmes such as the Global Water Partnership and the EU Water Initiative and through our bilateral aid budget, spending overall around £90 million each year on programmes to improve access to water and sanitation in developing countries.

NORTHERN IRELAND

CCTV

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the levels of criminal activity in areas of Northern Ireland that are now covered by CCTV compared to the levels before that coverage commenced. [176630]

Mr. Spellar: There are currently 19 town centre CCTV systems installed across Northern Ireland for the purposes of tackling crime and antisocial behaviour. In addition some 32 CCTV cameras have been installed at interface areas in Belfast to deal with incidents of public disorder.

The former Police Authority for Northern Ireland who handled the allocation of funding for most of the town centre schemes in Northern Ireland required each individual scheme to arrange an evaluation of their performance in the two years after the CCTV system became operational. All evaluations received to date, indicate that in the areas where CCTV was in operation, crime was reduced or, the rate of increase was slower than other areas and the level of detection of crime increased. In some areas the level of reported crime increased as the cameras witnessed crimes not normally reported, though this was usually combined with an increase in detection.

Wider research from other parts of the UK has established that CCTV is an effective crime reduction tool, particularly where it is used in conjunction with other crime reduction initiatives.

The network of CCTV cameras at interface locations in North and East Belfast has proved very effective not only in terms of effecting non-confrontational arrests but also in allowing police to deploy resources in a better informed manner. Accordingly, the cameras have helped maintain a relative calm at interface locations.

Electoral Office

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what funding has been made available, and from what sources, to the Electoral Office for the production and distribution of Electoral Identity Cards. [176961]

Mr. Spellar: The funding, made available by the Northern Ireland Office, for the production and distribution of the Electoral Identity Card is as follows:

£ million

	Budget	*Spend*
2002–03	1.78	1.16
2003–04	1	0.83
Total	2.78	1.99

The spend to date in the current financial year—2004–05—is £41,000. The budget is £100,000.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps the Electoral Office is taking to ensure that those in residential care in Northern Ireland are not disenfranchised through the omission of their names from the electoral register. [176969]

Mr. Spellar: This issue is an operational matter and is, therefore, the responsibility of the Chief Electoral Officer. He will be writing to the hon. Lady in due course.

A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library.

Fisheries

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much of the £1.5 million set aside for the Cod Recovery Programme Transitional Aid (Tie-Up) Scheme 2004 has been allocated to vessel owners in Northern Ireland; what amount has been set aside for appeals; what the timescale is for those appeals; and who has been appointed to hear them. [176988]

Mr. Pearson: To date the total amount allocated to vessel owners under the Temporary Cessation (Tie-up) Scheme has been £1,228,729.37. No funding provision has been made for appeals. A four-stage appeals procedure, including final appeal to an independent panel appointed by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, is available. Appeals will be progressed as promptly as possible, taking account of the circumstances of the particular case.

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many vessel owners have accepted grants under the terms of the Northern Ireland Fishing Vessel Decommissioning Scheme 2003; how many have been offered grants under the terms of this scheme and refused that offer; and how many have been offered grants under the terms of this scheme and declined but have subsequently been successful in an application for transitional aid during Cod Closure in 2004. [176989]

Mr. Pearson: The information is as follows:

Fishing Vessel Decommissioning Scheme 2003

	Number
Owners accepting offers of grant under scheme	19
Owners refusing offers of grant under scheme	11
Owners refusing offers of grant under scheme who have been successful under the2004 transitional aid scheme	8

Health Services

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of expenditure resulting from litter, in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by council area. [176849]

Angela Smith: This information is not collected centrally. The Chief Executive of the Environment and Heritage Service has asked district councils to provide the information requested. It is expected that it will take several weeks to gather this information and I shall write to the hon. Lady once it is collated. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library.

MOT Appointments

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many drivers are awaiting MOT test appointments, broken down by area. [176852]

Angela Smith: The total number of customers who have received vehicle test appointments for the period June to September 2004 is 57,955. The total number of unprocessed applications for MOT appointments is calculated at 7,510. The following table provides a breakdown by centre and month.

Test centre	June	July	August	September	Grand total	Postal applications not yet processed
Armagh	1,018	476	629	—	2,123	650
Ballymena	2,670	1,867	—	—	4,537	0
Belfast	2,459	1,978	1,155	—	5,592	620
Coleraine	2,471	1,376	56	—	3,903	0
Cookstown	1,932	1,129	671	—	3,732	310
Craigavon	2,210	1,431	293	201	4,135	1,330
Downpatrick	2,499	1,620	294	—	4,413	0
Enniskillen	1,520	1,163	20	—	2,703	0
Larne	1,232	884	260	—	2,376	0
Lisburn	2,088	1,206	427	2	3,723	1,110
Mallusk	1,958	1,197	192	—	3,347	1,470
Londonderry	1,978	1,406	—	—	3,384	0
Newry	2,068	1,382	709	144	4,303	1,280
Newtownards	3,869	2,443	751	—	7,063	740
Omagh	1,779	833	9	—	2,621	0
Grand total	31,751	20,391	5,466	347	57,955	7,510

Planning Service

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps the Planning Service has taken over the past five years to ensure that planning permissions are adhered to during the construction of buildings in each local government district. [176304]

Angela Smith: It is not Planning Service practice routinely to inspect all development after planning permission is granted and where inspections are carried out priority would be given to controversial proposals.

However, where Planning Service establishes or is advised that there is a breach of condition attached to a planning permission, action will be taken to regularise the breach where appropriate.

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many applications for planning permission have been submitted to the Planning Service in Northern Ireland in each local government district in each of the last five years; and how many of these applicants have subsequently been advised to submit retrospective planning applications following rejection of the initial application. [176305]

Angela Smith: Planning Service's current records have only been kept by council area since 2000. The number of planning applications submitted to Planning Service during the last four years is set out in the table.

Council area	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Antrim	824	825	1,064	1,489
Ards	986	1,052	1,247	1,201
Armagh	1,162	1,322	1,258	1,502
Ballymena	870	908	1,164	1,538
Ballymoney	503	568	641	869
Banbridge	872	963	1,325	1,664
Belfast	2,332	2,573	2,361	2,624
Carrickfergus	298	302	313	354
Castlereagh	556	576	572	583
Coleraine	838	1,023	1,030	1,225
Cookstown	761	737	845	1,140
Craigavon	1,011	973	1,147	1,211
Derry	923	932	951	1,072
Down	1,256	1,322	1,541	1,346
Dungannon	1,128	1,182	1,345	1,491
Fermanagh	1,338	1,292	1,564	1,947
Larne	364	362	369	432
Limavady	458	464	542	705
Lisburn	1,160	1,339	1,487	1,658
Magherafelt	812	973	1,118	1,544
Moyle	366	437	424	505
Newry and Mourne	1,954	2,066	2,368	3,148
Newtownabbey	567	662	688	660
North Down	726	758	758	871
Omagh	1,042	1,037	1,103	1,412
Strabane	584	633	686	869
Totals	23,691	25,281	27,911	33,060

It is not Planning Service's policy to advise applicants to submit retrospective planning applications following rejection of the initial application. In addition, Planning Service does not record separate information on retrospective planning applications. As this information is not routinely collected, it could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many enforcement actions have been undertaken by the Planning Service in Northern Ireland over the past five years in each local government district; and what the results were in each case. [176306]

Angela Smith: Although statistical records have been maintained by the Planning Service since 1999, it is not possible to provide a breakdown of enforcement statistics by local government district. Additionally, the recorded data do not hold individual records of the results in each case, and this information could be provided only at a disproportionate cost.

Presented below is the total number of enforcement cases for each year since 1999 and the number of Enforcement Notices issued.

	Cases investigated	Enforcement Notices issued
2003	1,876	56
2002	1,665	40
2001	3,800	50
2000	3,500	54
1999	2,678	82

Playgroups (South Down)

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the effects of the withdrawal of funding from the Special European Union Programmes Body on playgroups in the South Down area; and whether he is taking steps to restore this funding. [177502]

Angela Smith: No funding from the SEUPB to playgroups in the South Down area has been withdrawn. SEUPB assists playgroups primarily through NIPPA under Measure 2.5 of the PEACE II Programme. All projects assisted under this measure will be able to benefit fully from their allocations although some projects are now coming to an end. We are currently assessing the impact of this on early years provision across Northern Ireland and how this can be addressed.

Police Reserve

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the conditions of employment are for members of the *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time Reserve of the Police Service of Northern Ireland. [176539]

Mr. Spellar: The following regulations set out the conditions of employment for members of the *(a)* full-time Reserve and *(b)* part-time Reserve:

Royal Ulster Constabulary Reserve (Full-Time) (Appointment and Conditions of Service) Regulations 1996.

Police Service of Northern Ireland Reserve (Full-Time) (Appointment and Conditions of Service) Regulations 2002.

Royal Ulster Constabulary Reserve (Part-Time) (Appointment and Conditions of Service) Regulations 1996.

Police Service of Northern Ireland Reserve (Part-Time) Regulations 2004 (which includes provisions relating to members appointed prior to 8 February 2004.)

Police Reserve Trainee Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2004.

In addition, the Police (Recruitment) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2001, as amended, contain provisions relating to prohibited business interests for police Reserve trainees.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many hours per month members of the part-time Reserve of the Police Service of Northern Ireland are required to work to qualify for validation of training; and if he will make a statement. [176540]

Mr. Spellar: The PSNI are providing foundation training in three different packages to suit the circumstances of individual Reserve trainees. Validation is not directly related to the number of hours worked but to a series of knowledge and skills-based exercises which members must complete to the required standard.

Police Trophies

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether an official record exists of *(a)* competition trophies and *(b)* other items belonging to the Ulster Special Constabulary at the time of their disbandment; and where those items are located. [176331]

Mr. Spellar: The Police Service of Northern Ireland have advised me that a small number of Ulster Special Constabulary competition trophies are kept as part of the police museum collection. No other official records exist.

Power-Sharing Agreements

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether he has discussed with representatives of Lisburn district council power-sharing agreements. [176329]

Angela Smith: There have been no discussions with representatives of Lisburn city council about power sharing arrangements. Under current legislation the Government have power to intervene in the internal affairs of a council only if it is failing to fulfil its statutory functions. Power sharing arrangements are essentially an internal matter for district councils.

The issue of governance arrangements in district councils has been raised during recent consultation on the Review of Public Administration and that it will be addressed when firm proposals on the Review are published for consultation in the autumn.

River Mourne/River Foyle

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the daily fish counts for *(a)* June and *(b)* July 2003 were at Sion Mills on the River Mourne in West Tyrone. [176883]

Mr. Pearson: The counts for June and July 2003 are detailed as follows:

Date	Fish count
June 2003	
1st	19
2nd	20
3rd	16
4th	7
5th	6
6th	5
7th	15
8th	20
9th	37
10th	16
11th	19
12th	46
13th	84
14th	185
15th	535
16th	904
17th	402
18th	105
19th	394
20th	494
21st	77
22nd	25
23rd	58
24th	51
25th	49

Date	Fish count
26th	72
27th	618
28th	278
29th	175
30th	51
Total for June 2003	4,783
July 2003	
1st	44
2nd	36
3rd	63
4th	1
5th	3
6th	6
7th	10
8th	9
9th	20
10th	43
11th	612
12th	681
13th	58
14th	24
15th	23
16th	31
17th	22
18th	95
19th	345
20th	171
21st	157
22nd	59
23rd	29
24th	42
25th	25
26th	29
27th	22
28th	38
29th	103
30th	6
31st	30
Total for July 2003	2,837

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the daily river height for *(a)* June and *(b)* July 2003 was at Sion Mills on the River Mourne in West Tyrone. [176884]

Mr. Pearson: The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Rivers Agency does not have a gauging station in Sion Mills and therefore actual data on river height has been obtained from the Agency's Drumnabuoy House River Flow Gauging Station on the River Mourne near Strabane, approximately 3 km downstream of the weir in Sion Mills. This records water levels at 15-minute intervals.

Recorded water levels in June and July 2003 were in the range 2.71 metres above Ordnance Datum (OD) Belfast on 16 July to 4.28 metres OD on 10 June. On 48 of the 61 days in question the levels were below the average daily level of 3.32 m OD for this section of the River (as measured over the last 21 years).

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what progress has been made with regard to the buy-out of salmon net licences in the Foyle Estuary; and if he will make a statement; [176886]

(2) what reports he has received of plans for the buy-out of salmon net licences on the River Foyle; and if he will make a statement. [176885]

Mr. Pearson: There are currently no plans to buy out salmon nets on the Foyle Estuary. The stocks of salmon returning to the Foyle catchment are managed effectively by the Loughs Agency to ensure that spawning escapement targets are achieved each year. The effectiveness of the conservation and protection regulations introduced by the Loughs Agency are continually kept under review using data collected from fish counters, population surveys and catch returns. The Loughs Agency manages the stocks with the objective of achieving maximum sustainable productivity, and has achieved adult returns in excess of conservation limits for the past number of years.

Veterinary Nursing

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what his policy is on the funding of Veterinary Nursing NVQ training levels 2 and 3 in Northern Ireland. [177400]

Mr. Pearson: The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD), through the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE), provides veterinary nursing training programmes leading to NVQ levels 2 and 3 in Northern Ireland.

Participants taking veterinary nursing programmes on a further education basis are charged programme fees and must also enrol with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons and pay examination fees.

Approved veterinary training practices are eligible to apply for support under the Modern Apprenticeship scheme. This covers the above fees and provides financial support to the veterinary training practice. To date only one training practice with two trainees has availed of Modern Apprenticeship.

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how further education training courses for veterinary nursing are funded in Northern Ireland. [177448]

Mr. Pearson: The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD), through the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE), provides veterinary nursing training programmes leading to NVQ levels 2 and 3 in Northern Ireland.

Participants taking veterinary nursing programmes on a further education basis are charged programme fees that were initially benchmarked against the fees for similar programmes in the UK and increased in line with inflation since 1999.

In addition, participants must also enrol with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons and pay examination fees.

Approved veterinary training practices are eligible to apply for support under the Modern Apprenticeship scheme. This covers the above fees and provides financial support to the veterinary training practice. To date, only one training practice with two trainees has availed of Modern Apprenticeship.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Adult Learning Inspectorate

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what responsibility the Adult Learning Inspectorate has to report on the exercise of the duty of care; what care standards inspectors will use when examining training regimes in army barracks; and in what form these standards are available in the public domain. [177476]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: These are matters for the Adult Learning Inspectorate. David Sherlock, the Chief Inspector, will write to my hon. Friend with this information and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Adult Literacy

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people achieved *(a)* a Certificate in Adult Literacy (Entry Level), *(b)* a Certificate in Adult Literacy (level 1) and *(c)* a Certificate in Adult Literacy (level 2) in each year since 2000. [177383]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Information on the number of learners achieving Certificates in Adult Literacy through LSC funded FE providers are presented as follows. The Certificate in Adult Literacy, accredited by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, was introduced during the 2001/02 teaching year. Prior to this, not all literacy qualifications were based on the National Qualification Framework (NQF) and accredited by national awarding bodies.

Learners achieving literacy qualifications, 2000/01 to 2002/03—through LSC funded further education providers

Qualification/level	*Learners achieving (thousand) 2000/01*	*2001/02*	*2002/03*
Certificate in Adult Literacy (QCA accredited)			
Entry level	—	0.2	11.1
Level 1	—	0.3	8.1
Level 2	—	0.1	3.4
Total		0.6	22.6
Transitional qualifications[1]			
Up to level 2	21.6	21.6	—
Overall total	21.6	22.2	22.6

[1] Literacy qualifications certificated by national awarding bodies.

Where individual learners progress and achieve qualifications at different levels, they may be counted in more than one of the categories in the table.

Apprenticeship Schemes

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on apprenticeship schemes supported by the Department. [176483]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: There are currently over 255,000 apprenticeships supported by the Department, the highest number ever and more than three times as many as in 1997. In order to ensure that the initiative meets the evolving needs of the economy we have decided to make some changes. Our overall aim is to build up a coherent ladder of high quality vocational opportunities responsive to the needs of young people, older workers and business.

On 10 May the Government announced its intention to put in place a family of apprenticeship programmes to suit a variety of needs from aged 14 upwards. These will include: Junior Apprenticeships for 14 to 16-year-olds, a pre-apprenticeship route within the existing Entry to Employment programme, Apprenticeships at NVQ Level 2, Advanced Apprenticeships at NVQ Level 3 and a strengthened progression route into higher education, including vocational Foundation Degrees. In addition we are developing Apprenticeships for Adults in those sectors with the greatest need.

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many residents of Blackpool North and Fleetwood have undertaken apprenticeships in each of the last five years. [176208]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is not available at parliamentary constituency level. Nor is the information available on a consistent geographical basis over the last five years. However, the following table shows the number of starts on apprenticeships (formerly known as Advanced Modern Apprenticeships) and apprenticeships at level two (formerly known as Foundation Modern Apprenticeships) in the Lancashire LSC area between April 2001 and the end of July 2003, as well as the number of starts from April 1998 to March 2001 in the two TECs that amalgamated into Lancashire LSC—ELTEC and LAWTEC.

Time period[1]	*TEC/LSC*	*Advanced MA*	*Foundation MA*
April 1998 to March 1999	ELTEC	1,000	400
	LAWTEC	1,600	100
April 1999 to March 2000	ELTEC	800	1,100
	LAWTEC	1,900	1,800
April 2000 to March 2001	ELTEC	900	1,300
	LAWTEC	1,800	2,100
April 2001 to July 2002	Lancashire LSC	1,900	4,100
August 2002 to July 2003	Lancashire LSC	1,500	3,300

[1] TECs reported the figures in financial years. LSC reports figures in academic years. The first LSC 'year' was 16 months in order to bring the financial year figures into line with academic years.

Source:
TEC Management Information
LSC Individualised Learner Record

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what additional funding will be earmarked for apprenticeships for people aged over 25 years in financial year 2005–06; and if he will make a statement. [177013]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: We and the LSC are working with SSCs and key partners towards initial trials of apprenticeships for adults in a small number of sectors in England starting later this year, funded in 2004–05 by the LSC with other agencies. Funds for expansion of apprenticeships for adults in 2005–06 and beyond will be subject to post-spending review allocations.

Armed Forces Training Establishments

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what estimate he has made of the inspection charge to be levied upon the Ministry of

Defence under section 56(4) of the Learning and Skills Act 2000 for the inspection and oversight of armed forces training establishments; [176319]

(2) under what circumstances a training provider may limit the power of the Adult Learning Inspectorate to publish its findings as it considers appropriate; [176320]

(3) what assurances have been given by the Ministry of Defence that inspectors attached to the Adult Learning Inspectorate will have all the powers available to them under section 57(2) of the Learning and Skills Act 2000, with particular reference to *(a)* the right of entry to army barracks and *(b)* the right to access documents; [176321]

(4) what assurances have been given by the Ministry of Defence that military orders will be issued to surrender personnel accused of obstructing an inspector acting under the authority of the Adult Learning Inspectorate; [176322]

(5) what the composition is of the Board of the Adult Learning Inspectorate; what the qualifications of each board member are; and what assessment he has made of the extent to which those qualifications enable the Inspectorate to examine duty of care issues in military establishments. [176323]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: These are matters for the Adult Learning Inspectorate. David Sherlock, the Chief Inspector, will write to my hon. Friend with this information and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Bullying

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the level of bullying in schools in the Vale of York, with particular reference to those within the City of York. [176688]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Data on bullying are not collected centrally and there is no reliable basis for an estimate of prevalence. However, any level of bullying is too high and we are determined to help schools to tackle the problem. Our guidance pack 'Bullying: Don't Suffer in Silence' and the anti-bullying Charter and the anti-bullying website www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying offer detailed advice on preventing and addressing bullying. In November 2003 I launched our anti-bullying Charter for schools, which schools are now signing. It is accompanied by a summary of effective practice to help schools review and enhance their anti-bullying policies. The Charter was launched at the first of a series of regional conferences which have been running since November 2003 and culminate with a final conference in June. These conferences are an opportunity for schools and other partners to share good practice on this issue. Details of the conferences can be accessed online at www.teachernet.gov.uk/antibullying.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures he is taking to tackle bullying in schools; what guidance his Department has issued to teachers and schools about the prevention of bullying; and if he will publish his guidance. [176689]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Bullying is a serious problem which puts the emotional well-being and educational achievement of pupils at risk. Schools should treat bullying seriously and take steps to combat it promptly and firmly whenever and wherever it occurs. From September 1999, head teachers of maintained schools have been under a duty to draw up measures to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils.

In December 2000 we launched a guidance pack for schools with an accompanying video aimed at pupils. The pack is entitled 'Bullying: don't suffer in silence'. In September 2002 an updated version of this document was issued.

There is also a new public information film, 'Tell Someone', to raise awareness and encourage children to tell someone if they are being bullied, and an anti-bullying website at www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying, which contains the text of the updated pack. The Department has also funded an expansion of the Parentline Plus free helpline for the parents of bullying victims (0808 800 2222). The key message of the strategy is that pupils should be able to report bullying to someone they trust and not suffer in silence.

We have launched an anti-bullying 'Charter for Action' which all schools are encouraged to sign and which offers a series of practical suggestions for tackling bullying. The anti-bullying Charter went into every maintained school in England on 19 January 2004. Like all the rest of our anti-bullying guidance, this is published and in the public domain. For further information on the Department's work to counter bullying in schools can be found on our website at www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying.

A further measure has been the 'Make The Difference' campaign, a series of anti-bullying conferences, one in each government office region. Eight have taken place, the last is on 14 June. These conferences allow head teachers in each region to share effective practise and benefit from leading national practice.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what representations he has received on the level of bullying in the Vale of York. [176690]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: We are unable to provide a breakdown of representations on the level of bullying in the Vale of York. We receive representations from individual parents about incidents of bullying but we do not analyse these by LEA.

However, any level of bullying is too high and we are determined to help schools to tackle the problem. Our guidance pack 'Bullying: Don't Suffer in Silence' and the anti-bullying Charter and the anti-bullying website www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying offer detailed advice on preventing and addressing bullying. In November 2003 I launched our anti-bullying Charter for schools, which schools are now signing. It is accompanied by a summary of effective practice to help schools review and enhance their anti-bullying policies. The Charter was launched at the first of a series of regional conferences which have been running since November 2003 and culminate with a final conference in June. These conferences are an opportunity for schools and other

partners to share good practice on this issue. Details of the conferences can be accessed online at www.teachernet.gov.uk/antibullying.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much central funding was available to schools in the Vale of York in each of the past three years for programmes to combat bullying. [176691]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Department does not disaggregate the money made available to schools for behaviour improvement. Within these budgets schools themselves make decisions on how much money to devote to anti-bullying work.

Bureaucracy

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what action has been taken in response to each recommendation in the report "Trust in the Future"—Bureaucracy Busting Task Force Report published in November 2002. [177374]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The implementation of the recommendations in this report is a matter for the LSC. Mark Haysom, the council's chief executive, will write to the hon. Gentleman on this matter. A copy of his reply will be placed in the House Library.

Following the publication last month of their final report, "Extending Trust" the Bureaucracy Task Force has wound up. Last year we established a formal gatekeeper group for the learning and skills sector, the Bureaucracy Review Group, chaired by Sir Andrew Foster and this group is taking work to reduce unnecessary bureaucracy forward. The group is reviewing the key drivers in the learning and skills sector delivery systems and considering all new and changing initiatives before they impact on providers so it can assess their likely impact and seek changes that will remove existing unnecessary burdens and ensure new ones are not created.

Centres of Vocational Excellence

Mr. Flight: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total expenditure on Centres of Vocational Excellence has been in each year since 1997. [176218]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Learning and Skills Council has made excellent progress in establishing a network of Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs). We aim to have a network of 400 CoVEs by March 2006. To date 262 centres have been established, which provide high quality training in a wide range of vocational specialisms to help meet employers' skills needs.

The programme started in April 2001. Expenditure in each year is:

£ million

Financial year	*Total expenditure*
2001–02	1.8
2002–03	40
2003–04	78
Total	119.8

Mr. Flight: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what cross-departmental coordination there has been between the Learning Skills Council and the regional development agencies in the creation and administration of the centres of vocational excellence. [176902]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The LSC has actively sought to engage Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) in CoVE development at both strategic and operational levels.

The RDAs contribute to future development of CoVEs through membership of the LSC's national CoVE Technical Steering Group, and all have been involved in planning and implementation of the programme at a regional level through their representation on regional CoVE advisory groups. RDAs are key to ensuring that CoVEs focus on meeting regional skills priorities and that regional CoVE development is coherent with regional economic strategies.

Computer File Formats

Mr. Allan: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what his Department's policy is in respect of the computer file formats used for the *(a)* distribution and *(b)* archiving of publicly available documents. [173355]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Department for Education and Skills adhere to the current Government guidelines for publishing documents on www.dfes.gov.uk and other departmental websites. Where possible, documents are provided in as many formats as possible to allow different users and systems access to the information.

Documents are available in the following formats:

Most commonly

HTML (web pages)
Adobe Acrobat (.pdf)
Microsoft Word (.doc)
Rich Text Format (.rtf).

Also used where appropriate

Microsoft Excel (.xls)
Comma Separated Variables (.csv)
Microsoft Powerpoint (.ppt)
Plain Text (.txt).

Out-of-date documents and pages on the DfES website are archived so they can be retrieved if needed. Publications that have been superseded by other information are noted as such.

Drug and Alcohol Misuse

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many incidents of pupils being caught with *(a)* drugs and *(b)* alcohol on school premises were recorded in each year since 1997. [176622]

Mr. Miliband: The requested information is not held centrally.

Education Funding (Brighton and Hove)

Mr. Lepper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the funding per pupil was in the Brighton and Hove Local Education Authority in each year since 1997–98. [176575]

Mr. Miliband: The tables as follows show total funding per pupil in Brighton and Hove since 1997–98.

Funding per pupil aged 3–19
Real terms at 2002–03 prices
Brighton and Hove

£

	Grants[1]	EFS/SSA[2]	Total funding
1997–98	120	2,860	2,980
1998–99	70	2,950	3,020
1999–00	160	2,980	3,140
2000–01	350	3,030	3,390
2001–02	440	3,100	3,530
2002–03	580	3,030	3,610
2003–04	530	3,140	3,670
2004–05	[1]—	3,250	[1]—

[1] Not available

There have been changes to the structure of Education Formula Spending (EPS) and Standard Spending Assessments (SSA) which make them incomparable over time—for example several large transfers from SSA/EFS to grant funding. Only total funding per pupil (including SSA/EFS and grants) is comparable between years. The pensions transfers to EFS and LSC in 2003–04 and 2004–05 are excluded from EFS and total funding figures to enable comparison between years.

Language Training

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps he is taking to ensure that non-English speaking spouses of UK citizens are given access to language training; and if he will make a statement. [176279]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision is a key part of Skills for Life: the Government's national strategy for improving adult literacy and numeracy. This provision is free to eligible learners and is widely available through further education colleges. A spouse of a UK citizen is eligible for Learning and Skills Council further education funding if they have been both married and resident in the UK for one year. These arrangements only apply to spouses from outside the European Union.

Learning and Skills Council

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) has received in each of the last three years on Merseyside; how much funding the LSC will receive in the next three years; and if he will express the figures in (i) whole numbers and (ii) the percentage annual increase or decrease in funding over those periods. [177262]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council. I have therefore asked Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, to write to the hon. Lady with the information requested and to place a copy of his reply in the Library.

Non-vocational Adult Learning Courses (Funding)

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding was made available to support non-vocational adult learning courses *(a)* in this financial year and *(b)* in each of the past four years; and if he will make a statement. [177569]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I have set out separately in the following tables the figures for expenditure and numbers of learners in (i) adult and community learning and adult education courses run through local education authorities; (ii) learndirect; and (iii) Skills for Life. Together these equate most closely to non-vocational adult learning courses.

In the Skills Strategy White Paper, "21st Century Skills: Realising Our Potential", Government reiterated and strengthened their commitment to adult and community learning. We will help adults improve their basic skills in literacy, language and numeracy. We are also committed to safeguarding a varied range of learning opportunities for personal fulfilment, community development and active citizenship.

Adult education classes

Financial year	Funding (£ million)[1]
2000–01	145
2001–02	153
2002–03	183
2003–04	206
2004–05	207.4

[1] Annual expenditure, by financial year, on adult and community learning run through local education authorities. The figures for 2002–03 and 2003–04 include the budgets for Neighbourhood Learning and family learning, starting from a nil base in 2001–02.

learndirect

Academic year	Funding (£ million)
2000/01	49
2001/02	134
2002/03	171
2003/04	164
2004/05	164

Skills for Life

Academic year	Funding (£ million)[1]
2000/01	165
2001/02	306
2002/03	409
2003/04	419
2004/05	430

[1] Annual expenditure by academic year, on adult basic skills. The figures for 2003/04 and 2004/05 are estimated figures rolled forward for inflation.

School Standards

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools were classified as failing in each year since 1996–97 in (i) Greater London and (ii) each London borough. [177041]

Mr. Miliband: This is a matter for Ofsted. HM Chief Inspector, David Bell, will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of his letter in the Library.

Secondary Schools

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many secondary schools are located in the 2000 most deprived local authority wards; and how many of these have specialist school status. [176897]

Mr. Miliband: There are 974 maintained secondary schools (excluding special schools and middle-deemed secondary schools) in the 2000 most deprived local authority wards, based on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation released in 2000. Of these, 384 are operational as specialist schools.

Sector Skills Councils

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the *(a)* set up and *(b)* estimated running costs in the first year of operation are of each sector skills council. [177379]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) are private sector organisations. With one exception they are companies limited by guarantee. Their structures and costs are determined by the specific sectors they serve and vary significantly.

We do not have detailed information about individual SSC costs. The Government, through the Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA), will provides up to £400,000 towards the start up of each SSC and once licensed £4,000,000 towards their running costs for the first three years. These funds are not intended to cover all the costs of an SSC and each is expected to generate significant additional funding from their sector and elsewhere.

Teachers' TV

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether further education lecturers will be included in Teachers' TV at its launch; and if he will make a statement. [177004]

Mr. Miliband: The Department has undertaken a feasibility study and pilot for Teachers' TV and will make a decision on a channel launch shortly. As part of this work, we have looked at how the channel could support the needs of people in both Early Years and the Further Education sector, as well as people who work in schools. If the channel proceeds it will have some programmes aimed at meeting the needs of FE lecturers.

Truancy (Penalty Notices)

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many times head teachers and education welfare officers have enforced their right to issue on-the-spot fines to parents of pupils who truant; and what the total revenue gained from payment of such fines is. [176799]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This initiative commenced on 27 February 2004 and information about the number of penalty notices issued for truancy or the revenue gained from payment of such fines is not collected centrally.

Veterinary Nursing Training (Funding)

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) for what reasons some learning and skills councils decline to fund veterinary nursing NVQ training; [177211]

(2) which local learning and skills councils fund veterinary nurse training through work-based learning funding; [177212]

(3) what the policy of the Learning and Skills Councils is on the funding of Veterinary Nursing NVQ training levels 2 and 3; [177399]

(4) how further education training courses for veterinary nursing are funded in England. [177447]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) is responsible for the planning and funding of further education and work-based learning for young people in England and decides whether it will fund individual qualifications through its national funding methodology. As the information requested relates to the LSC's operational responsibilities, the LSC's Chief Executive, Mark Haysom, will write to the hon. Member with the information requested and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

TRANSPORT

A1

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the traffic volumes at *(a)* the A1 Tyne crossing Newcastle, *(b)* the West Road A1 Interchange, *(c)* the Stamfordham Road A1 Interchange, *(d)* the Ponteland Road A1 Interchange, *(e)* the North Gosforth A1 Interchange and *(f)* the A1/A19 Interchange north of Newcastle have been in each year since 1997. [176225]

Mr. Jamieson: Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) volumes at those locations nearest to *(a)* the A1 Tyne Crossing Newcastle, *(b)* the West Road A1 Interchange, *(c)* the Stamfordham Road A1 Interchange, *(d)* the Ponteland Road A1 Interchange, *(e)* the North Gosforth A1 Interchange, and *(f)* the A1/A19 Interchange north of Newcastle in each year since 1997, where figures are available, are given in the table. Figures for 2003 have not yet been published.

Location	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
(a) A1 Tyne Crossing, Newcastle	81,700	83,000	86,100	83,200	81,900	89,000
(b) North East of West Road A1 Interchange	79,200	81,000	84,400	77,500	86,400	87,400
(c) and *(d)* North East of Stamfordham Road A1 Interchange	73,400	76,000	78,000	78,000	70,300	—
(e) South West of North Gosforth A1 Interchange	57,000	59,100	61,000	59,900	62,500	64,900
(f) South of A1/A19 Interchange North of Newcastle	46,600	47,700	48,300	48,300	49,400	49,400

A595

Dr. Jack Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress has been made in the preparation and design of the Lillyhall to Parton improvement on the A595 in West Cumbria; when comments on the draft orders will be considered; whether the scheme can be amended as a result; and if he will make a statement. [177100]

Dr. Howells: I refer my right hon. Friend to the answer of 12 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 545W. Since then, work has concentrated on preparing the draft orders under the Highways Act, and the accompanying Environmental Statement. This work is largely complete and these documents will be published later this year. This will mark the beginning of statutory procedures, during which time the public and those directly affected will have the opportunity to make representations to the Secretaries of State on the proposals. If necessary, a public inquiry will be held before an independent inspector to hear representations. Following the public inquiry, the inspector can recommend to the Secretaries of State that the draft orders be amended in the light of the public inquiry findings. On-going scheme progress would depend on the extent and scale of any such amendments and could require the re-publication of draft orders and another public inquiry.

Bus/Cycle Lanes (Bury, North)

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the total number of *(a)* bus lanes and *(b)* cycle lanes designated on roads in Bury, North constituency in each of the last 10 years. [176700]

Mr. McNulty: The number of bus lanes and cycle lanes designated on roads in Bury, North constituency in each of the last 10 years are tabled as follows:

	Number of cycle lanes	*Number of bus lanes*
1995	0	0
1996	2	1
1997	2	0
1998	1	0
1999	2	0
2000	0	0
2001	1	0
2002	3	0
2003	0	0
2004	1	0
Cumulative total	12	1

Freshford Station

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what meetings *(a)* he and *(b)* his ministerial colleagues and officials (i) have held and (ii) plan to hold with representatives of (A) Network Rail, (B) the Health and Safety Executive and (C) other interested parties, with regard to Freshford station near Bath; and if he will make a statement; [177497]

(2) what assessment he has made of *(a)* the safety and accessibility of the station platform at Freshford station, Bath, *(b)* progress with the proposed changes to the platform and *(c)* the likely completion date of the changes; and if he will make a statement. [177498]

Mr. McNulty: Ministers and officials have had no meetings with interested parties regarding Freshford station. However, the Government's independent health and safety rail regulator, the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) HM Railway Inspectorate (HMRI), has had a continued dialogue with Network Rail about their plans to raise a section of the platform at Freshford station near Bath. I understand that Network Rail will shortly provide further information to HMRI on plans to manage the risks from the operation of this scheme. This information will include how train operators plan to align train doors with the raised section of the platform. Once this information is received, HMRI anticipates being able to make a decision on Network Rail's proposal within a matter of days.

Parking

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many parking attendants *(a)* are employed and *(b)* were employed in 1999–2000 by local authorities (i) directly and (ii) indirectly through contractors. [177660]

Mr. McNulty: Statistics on the number of parking attendants employed by local authorities are not collected centrally.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether *(a)* health visitors and *(b)* general practitioners are subject to parking restrictions while undertaking their professional duties; what rationale underlies his policy in this area; and if he will make a statement. [177613]

Mr. McNulty: Parking controls are determined by local traffic authorities taking into account local circumstances, including the need to ensure safety, relieve congestion and manage the space available for parking. Everyone is required to have regard to parking controls. Giving blanket exemptions from controls is likely to undermine their effectiveness.

Local schemes may provide for dispensations for those whose duties necessarily take them into areas where parking controls are in force. For example, the Association of London Government runs the London-wide Health Emergency Badge scheme which confers parking privileges, such as free parking at meters and the ability to park on yellow lines, to doctors, nurses, midwives and health visitors who are engaged in urgent or emergency health care away from their normal base. Local authorities outside London have their own arrangements for dispensations. The need to cater for the requirements of community health care visitors is an issue which my Department draws to the attention of authorities outside London applying for decriminalised parking enforcement powers.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment has been made of the effects of decriminalisation of illegal parking, with particular reference to the use of private contractors by local authorities for enforcement of parking regulations; and if he will make a statement. [177662]

Mr. McNulty: Research into the impact of decriminalised parking enforcement was carried out shortly after its introduction in the London boroughs of Bexley, Hammersmith and Fulham, and Westminster

and outside London in the cities of Oxford and Winchester. In the case of Hammersmith and Fulham and Winchester, the parking attendants were directly employed by the authorities. In the other three cases, parking attendants were employed by contractors undertaking enforcement on behalf of the authorities. In all five cases, it was concluded that the introduction of decriminalised parking enforcement had led to improved compliance with parking regulations. Further details of the research may be found in the following Transport Research Laboratory reports:

"Special Parking Areas in London TRL Report 279 1997"

"The Special Parking Area in the District of Winchester TRL Report 333 1998"

he Special Parking Area in Oxford TRL Report 405 1999."

Road Safety

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the total number of *(a)* deaths and *(b)* serious injuries on the roads of Bury, North constituency in each of the last 10 years. [176699]

Mr. Jamieson: The available information relates to local authority areas. The number of *(a)* deaths and *(b)* serious injuries on the roads of the Bury local authority area in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available, are shown in the table. Estimates on the basis of parliamentary constituencies will become available in the summer when I shall write to my hon. Friend with figures for Bury, North and place a copy of my letter in the Libraries of the House.

	Killed	*Serious*
1993	14	79
1994	8	90
1995	10	73
1996	3	68
1997	14	60
1998	6	29
1999	2	49
2000	10	40
2001	3	51
2002	8	53
All	78	592

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the percentage change in *(a)* deaths and *(b)* serious injuries on the roads of Manchester, Central has been since 1997. [177694]

Mr. Jamieson: The available information relates to local authority areas. In the Manchester local authority area there were 32 deaths in road accidents in 1997 and 15 deaths in 2002, the latest year for which information is available. The number of serious injuries rose by 3 per cent. from 244 in 1997 to 252 in 2002. Estimates on the basis of parliamentary constituency will become available in the summer, and I shall write to my hon. Friend with figures for Manchester, Central and place a copy of my letter in the Libraries of the House.

Traffic Levels

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the projected growth by 2010 from the 1990 base level of *(a)* car, *(b)* freight and *(c)* total traffic for the EU, broken down by country. [176037]

Mr. Jamieson: The information requested is not available. The Department for Transport's projections for growth of road traffic in England, between 1990 and 2010, based on the National Transport Model, are set out in the table.

	With 10 year plan[1, 2] Index 1990 = 100
Cars and taxis	134–140
Goods vehicles (over 3.5 tonnes gvw)	119
Light goods vehicles	169–170
Buses and coaches	122
All motor traffic	136–142

[1] The range reflects key uncertainties in the modelling relating to forecasts of factors that influence travel, such as how people's choices are influenced by income growth and changes in the relative costs of each mode. In some cases both ends of the range produce the same forecast.

[2] Growth between 1990 and 1993 is based on Great Britain data.

Transport (Manchester, Central)

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the expected effect of investment railway improvements over the next 10 years upon residents in Manchester, Central. [177697]

Mr. McNulty: Residents of Manchester, Central will benefit from the new TransPennine Express franchise, which commenced in February. The franchise secures investment of around £260 million, which will include the introduction of a new fleet of 100 mph diesel trains leading to increased capacity, improved service quality and performance across the region. A new northern franchise, which will include local and regional services through Manchester, has been tendered competitively. Work continues on the West Coast Main Line upgrade, which will see a reduction in journey times on services to/from Manchester and an increase in service frequency.

Vehicle Emissions

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the common carcinogens emitted from petrol and diesel vehicles in the UK; and what tonnage of each was emitted in each year since 1997. [177479]

Mr. Jamieson: The information requested is as follows:

		Emissions					
		1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
Benzene							
Road vehicles-petrol	Ktonnes	22.4	19.4	16.6	5.1	4.8	4.2
Road vehicles-DERV	Ktonnes	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Other sources	Ktonnes	12.5	11.3	10.8	9.7	9.6	9.0
Total	Ktonnes	35.1	30.9	27.6	15.1	14.6	13.5
1,3-Butadiene							

Emissions

		1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Road vehicles-petrol	Ktonnes	4.3	3.7	3.1	2.6	2.1	1.7
Road vehicles-DERV	Ktonnes	1.7	1.5	1.4	1.2	1.1	1.0
Other sources	Ktonnes	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.0	0.9
Total	Ktonnes	7.2	6.3	5.7	4.8	4.2	3.7
Benzo[a]pyrene[1]							
Road vehicles-petrol	Kg	854	628	469	351	273	218
Road vehicles-DERV	Kg	464	422	386	348	317	291
Other sources[2]	Kg	9,898	8,692	7,778	5,993	6,694	5,866
Total[2]	Kg	11,215	9,742	8,634	6,692	7,284	6,375
Dioxins3 and Furans							
Road vehicles-petrol	Grammes-TEQ	11.1	8.2	5.4	4.6	3.8	3.0
Road vehicles-DERV	Grammes-TEQ	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5
Other sources[2]	Grammes-TEQ	453.3	386.9	368.4	313.4	314.7	307.0
Total[2]	Grammes-TEQ	464.8	395.5	374.3	318.4	318.9	310.5

[1] Benzo[a]pyrene is one compound from the "polycyclic aromatichydrocarbon" (PAH) group. The carcinogenic potency of these PAH's vary, and so Benzo[a]pyrene is used as an indicator for the PAH group.
[2] Excludes emissions from natural fires
[3] Dioxins and Furans are groups of compounds with different toxic potencies. Consequently, it is more representative to express the emissions in terms of "Toxic Equivalents" (TEQs). International Equivalents (I-TEQ) are used for these data.

TREASURY

Departmental Annual Reports

Mr. Willis: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what guidance his Department issues on the content of departmental annual reports. [177602]

Mr. Boateng: A copy of the guidance for the 2004 departmental reports is available in the House of Commons Library.

Labour Statistics

Mr. Benton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the levels of long-term *(a)* adult and *(b)* youth employment in Bootle over the last seven years. [177714]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Joe Benton, dated 9 June 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment. (177714)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. However, the LFS sample size is too small to give reliable estimates of unemployment in the Bootle Constituency.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for local areas including parliamentary constituencies.

The table gives total JSA claimants claiming for over 12 months and those aged 18 to 24-years-old claiming for over 12 months for the Bootle constituency. The figures are annual averages for each year since 1997. The data are not seasonally adjusted.

	All ages	*18–24 years*
1997	1,932	377
1998	1,406	254
1999	1,078	54
2000	912	16
2001	754	10
2002	693	14
2003	622	20

Note:
Computerised claims only.

Ms Walley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the level of unemployment was in each year since 1997 in Stoke-on-Trent, North. [177638]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Ms Joan Walley, dated 9 June 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment. (177638)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. However, the LFS sample size is too small to give reliable estimates of unemployment in the Stoke-on-Trent North Constituency.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (ISA) for local areas including parliamentary constituencies.

The table gives the annual average number of JSA claimants for the Stoke-on-Trent North constituency for each year since 1997.

	Number
1997	1,750
1998	1,554
1999	1,669
2000	1,396
2001	1,367
2002	1,330
2003	1,281

Tax Returns (Penalty Notices)

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many penalty notices have been issued by the

Inland Revenue to taxpayers for filing late tax returns which have subsequently been found to have been filed on time in each of the last five years. [177281]

Dawn Primarolo: This information is not available.

Unemployment

Simon Hughes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the unemployment rates for the 55-plus age group in *(a)* Greater London and *(b)* each Greater London borough in each of the last five years. [177058]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. Simon Hughes, dated 9 June 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment. I am replying in his absence. (177058)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions.

The attached table 1, gives unemployment rates for the 5 5-plus age group in Greater London covering the twelve month periods ending in February 1997, and each February from 2000 to 2003. Comparable information is currently not available for other years. The LFS sample size is too small to give reliable information about unemployment in each Greater London borough.

As with any sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to sampling variability.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for local areas including Greater London Boroughs. Table 2 gives the annual average number of JSA claimants for the age group 55 plus as a proportion of the resident population aged 55 to retirement age (55 to 64 for males, 55 to 59 for females) in Greater London and each Borough in Greater London for each year from 1999 to 2003. The data are not seasonally adjusted.

Table 1: Unemployment rate[1] for the 55-plus age group in Greater London—12 months ending February in 1997 and each February from 2000 to 2003

	Percentage
1997	9.3
2000	6.2
2001	5.7
2002	5.0

[1] This is the percentage of the economically active population aged 16 and over who are unemployed.

Note:
Economically active population refers to those who are either unemployed or in employment.

Source:
ONS—Labour Force Survey.

Table 2: Jobseeker's allowance claimants aged 55 and over in the London boroughs

Annual averages	Percentage of population[2] 1999	2000	2001	2002[1]	2003[1]
Barking and Dagenham	2.5	2.2	1.9	2.1	2.4
Barnet	2.2	1.8	1.6	1.9	2.0
Bexley	1.9	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.7
Brent	3.8	2.9	2.4	2.4	2.6
Bromley	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.5	1.6
Camden	4.6	3.7	3.2	3.6	3.6
City of London	2.5	1.8	1.7	1.5	1.7
Croydon	2.8	2.4	2.1	2.2	2.1
Ealing	2.7	2.1	1.8	2.0	2.1

Table 2: Jobseeker's allowance claimants aged 55 and over in the London boroughs

Annual averages	Percentage of population[2] 1999	2000	2001	2002[1]	2003[1]
Enfield	3.2	2.7	2.3	2.3	2.4
Greenwich	3.5	3.4	2.9	3.2	3.1
Hackney	5.8	4.5	3.5	3.6	4.1
Hammersmith and Fulham	4.3	3.8	3.0	3.2	3.4
Haringey	5.2	4.6	3.6	3.3	3.4
Harrow	2.5	1.9	1.5	1.6	1.7
Havering	1.7	1.6	1.2	1.4	1.5
Hillingdon	1.7	1.3	1.2	1.4	1.8
Hounslow	1.8	1.3	1.0	1.5	1.5
Islington	5.7	4.3	3.7	3.7	4.1
Kensington and Chelsea	2.7	2.3	1.7	1.8	2.1
Kingston-upon-Thames	2.0	1.6	1.1	1.3	1.5
Lambeth	5.5	5.0	4.5	4.5	4.5
Lewisham	4.4	3.9	3.4	3.3	3.5
Merton	2.7	2.0	1.7	2.1	2.5
Newham	4.2	3.5	2.9	2.6	2.6
Redbridge	2.3	2.1	1.6	1.7	1.7
Richmond-upon-Thames	2.0	1.7	1.4	1.7	1.9
Southwark	4.6	4.3	3.7	3.9	4.3
Sutton	1.7	1.4	1.1	1.6	1.7
Tower Hamlets	5.5	4.9	3.9	3.6	3.7
Waltham Forest	3.4	3.0	2.6	2.8	3.1
Wandsworth	3.8	3.4	2.9	2.9	3.0
Westminster, City of	3.4	2.9	2.5	2.5	2.6

[1] Based on the 2001 resident population.
[2] Claimant count figures as the percentage of the resident population aged 55 to retirement age

Source:
Jobcentre Plus Administrative system Claimant count proportions using mid—2002.

Working Tax Credit

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what amount of funding his Department has budgeted to cover the childcare element of working tax credit in 2003–04 and 2004–05; and if he will make a statement; [177516]

(2) how many families or women with a child under the age of *(a)* one year and *(b)* six months are in receipt of the childcare element of the working tax credit; and if he will make a statement; [177519]

(3) what estimate has been made of the take-up rate of the childcare element of working tax credit as a percentage of those families and single parents who are eligible to receive it since the benefit was introduced; and if he will make a statement. [177520]

Dawn Primarolo: For the cost of the childcare element of the working tax credit, I refer the hon. Member to my reply to her on 27 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 866W.

About 25,000 families with a child under one were benefiting from the childcare element at 5 April 2004, of which 5,000 had a child aged under six months. These are estimates based on a sample of cases and should be treated with caution. Also, they exclude such families who had not claimed tax credits, or had not notified the Inland Revenue of the young child or of the childcare costs, by 5 April 2004—they have three months to claim and benefit in full. They also exclude families whose initial claim, or change of circumstance, was being processed at that date.

Estimates of the take-up rate requested would have to be based on household survey data. These surveys contain too few sample cases to produce reliable estimates.

WORK AND PENSIONS

National Insurance Numbers

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many national insurance numbers *(a)* have been issued in each year since 1992, *(b)* have been extinguished in each year since 1992 and *(c)* have been current in each year since 1992. [177533]

Mr. Pond: The information is as follows:

	Total allocated	*Total deleted*	*Increase per year*
1992[1]	9,765,000	21,000	9,744,000
1993[1]	3,292,000	19,000	3,273,000
1994	1,057,000	15,000	1,042,000
1995	1,008,000	16,000	992,000
1996[2]	979,000	55,000	924,000
1997[2]	1,018,000	58,000	960,000
1998[2]	1,027,000	38,000	989,000
1999[2]	1,023,000	61,000	962,000
2000[2]	996,000	182,000	814,000
2001	928,000	100,000	828,000
2002	1,082,000	4,000	1,078,000
2003	1,142,000	4,000	1,138,000
Up to 30 April 2004	411,000	1,000	410,000

[1] The allocation of Child Reference Numbers (CRN's) commenced in May 1992. From that date to February 1993 Child Benefit Branch allocated NINO's for all children hence the large number of created records during this period.
[2] High number of de[l]tions due to Data Cleaning Project which targeted duplicate NINO's/invalid NINO's.
Note:
These figures have been rounded to the nearest thousand.

Health and Safety Executive

Andrew Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of the Health and Safety Executive's employees based in offices outside London travel to work by car; and how many HSE offices have green travel plans in place. [176720]

Jane Kennedy: The information about travel to work is not available.

There are no green travel plans in place at present for any of HSE's offices. A green travel plan for HSE's London Headquarters will be published shortly. A plan will be put in place at HSE's Merseyside Centre when HSE moves to its new PFI building next year. Further travel plans for HSE field offices will be implemented thereafter.

Andrew Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the capital cost is of the new headquarters of the Health and Safety Executive in Bootle; what the anticipated revenue costs in its first full year of operation are; and what the current building's annual revenue costs are in Bootle. [176721]

Jane Kennedy: The capital cost of the new headquarters of the Health and Safety Executive in Bootle, procured under the Private Finance Initiative, is £58.3 million (2003 prices) comprising £57 million on construction which is being met by the contractor and £1.3 million land purchase. The anticipated revenue costs in its first full year of operation from 2005 are £7.4 million (2005 prices). The annual revenue costs of current buildings in Bootle are £4.4 million (2004 prices).

Andrew Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the Health and Safety Executive North West region spent on casual staff in the region in financial year 2003–04. [176723]

Jane Kennedy: Expenditure on agency staff in the financial year 2003–04 in the North West Division was £143,352.

Andrew Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proposals the Health and Safety Executive will be bringing forward to introduce workplace-based parking charges. [176726]

Jane Kennedy: The Health and Safety Executive has no current proposals to introduce workplace-based parking charges.

Andrew Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make the Health and Safety Executive deputising allowance and day subsistence allowances inflation-proof; and what these allowances are *(a)* per hour and *(b)* per day at present. [176727]

Jane Kennedy: It is not the Health and Safety Executive's policy to directly link deputising allowance and day subsistence to inflation.

Deputising allowance is paid at a rate of 6 per cent. of the maximum of the pay range for the relevant higher job band, converted to an hourly rate. Pay range maxima are subject to annual negotiation with HSE Trade Unions. The rate of inflation influences the negotiations.

Day subsistence is a flat rate allowance based on the levels of average expenditure incurred by members of staff when they are away from their office on official business. These rates are reviewed annually with HSE Trade Unions.

The rate payable depends on the duration of absence:

£4.90 for over 5 hours

£9.30 for over 10 hours

£14.20 for over 12 hours.

Household Incomes

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of children in households with incomes below 60 per cent. of median income *(a)* before and *(b)* after housing costs (i) on the old equivalence scale and (ii) on the proposed new equivalence scale in the latest year for which figures are available. [177557]

Mr. Pond: The information is in the following table.

Number of children below various thresholds of contemporary income in 2002–03

	Number (million)
McClements Equivalisation (60 per cent. median)	
Before Housing Costs	2.6
After Housing Costs	3.6
OECD Equivalisation (60 per cent. median)	
Before Housing Costs	2.9

Notes:
1. The Households Below Average Income (HBAI) presents statistics on the proportion of children in low income households on both the McClements and modified OECD equalisation scales.

2. The modified OECD equivalence scale focuses on income before housing costs. We are adopting this income equalisation scale for the new long-term child poverty measure from 2004–05 so we can credibly benchmark our performance internationally.
3. The existing PSA to reduce by a quarter the number of children living in low income by 2004–05 uses the McClements Equivalence scale, and reports both before and after housing costs.
4. The Government recognises the continuing interest in results for income after housing costs. HBAI, a National Statistics publication, will continue to publish results both for income before housing costs, and for income after housing costs. These will also continue to be published in "Opportunity for all". Copies of both documents are available in the Library.

Source:
Family Resources Survey.

Pensioners (Benefits)

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent estimate his Department has made of the number of pensioners not claiming each means-tested benefit for which they are eligible, broken down by *(a)* benefit and *(b)* Government region. [177526]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested as estimates by government region are not available.

The latest national estimates of the number of pensioners in Great Britain who are eligible, but not receiving income related benefits relate to financial year 2001–02. These cover the minimum income guarantee, housing benefit and council tax benefit and are published in the DWP report entitled "Income Related Benefits Estimates of Take-Up in 2001–02". A copy of the publication is held in the Library.

Pensions

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many schemes with insufficient assets to secure their guaranteed minimum pensions have expressed an interest to *(a)* his Department and *(b)* other Government bodies in having their state pension fully reinstated; how many schemes have been treated as qualifying for this; how many schemes have had their state benefits reinstated; and how many members of these schemes have received their reinstated benefits. [177559]

Malcolm Wicks: A member of a contracted-out defined benefit occupational pension scheme that winds up with insufficient resources to secure accrued benefits in full may have their state scheme rights restored by a process known as "deemed buyback", operated by the Inland Revenue. In order to qualify both the scheme and the member must meet certain conditions.

To date, the Inland Revenue have had 59 schemes express an interest in "deemed buyback". Of these schemes, 33 have formally requested calculations and the Inland Revenue have agreed that all 33 schemes meet the qualifying conditions. Eight of these have been issued with the calculations necessary to allow the scheme to determine whether each member meets the criteria. The Inland Revenue are working with the remaining 25 schemes to finalise the required details before calculations can be issued.

It is individual scheme members who qualify for "deemed buyback" and it is the decision of the member whether to have their state scheme rights re-instated.

Trustees use the calculations issued by the Inland Revenue as part of the process to determine whether individuals can apply for "deemed buyback". As yet no-one is receiving reinstated benefits.

Mr. Leigh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when the Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority expects to have in place a fully developed risk model that targets schemes where funds may be at risk as recommended by the Committee of Public Accounts in its 15th Report of 2002–03. [177254]

Malcolm Wicks: In the light of the recommendations of the Committee of Public Accounts, the Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority (Opra) has been seeking, within the framework of its statutory powers and obligations, to refocus its resources on issues that present a real risk to members' benefits. In October 2003, Opra published revised guidance to scheme professionals on the reporting of breaches: statutory whistleblowers (scheme auditors and actuaries) are now expected to consider the nature and impact of any breach they identify before deciding whether or not to make a report to the authority. In May 2004, Opra also issued revised guidance to non-statutory whistleblowers. Copies of Opra's latest guidance to both statutory and non-statutory whistleblowers (Opra Note 1 and Opra Note 6, respectively) are available in the Library.

On 11 February, the Government published the Pensions Bill 2004, which proposes to replace Opra with a new regulatory body—The Pensions Regulator—from April 2005.

The Bill provides that the Pensions Regulator, in accordance with the recommendations of the 15th Report of 2002–03 of the Committee of Public Accounts will have statutory objectives to protect the benefits of members of work-based pension schemes and to promote, and improve the understanding of, the good administration of such schemes. The proposals contained within the Pensions Bill will enable the Pensions Regulator to target its resources on the areas that pose the greatest risk to members' benefits.

The new Pensions Regulator will begin operating its risk model from the organisation's inception, and will develop it as its information base improves. To prepare the ground, the Department is currently working with Opra to identify the information and analysis needed to give effect to a fully risk-focused approach as quickly as possible.

Road Accidents

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on his Department's progress in reviewing the Road Traffic Accident Fixed Costs Scheme in order to consider its extension to the employers' liability insurance market. [176976]

Jane Kennedy: The Department of Constitutional Affairs leads on the Road Traffic Accident (RTA) Fixed Costs Scheme. The Civil Justice Council will conduct the formal evaluation of this scheme at the end of 2005.

The Government have built on the momentum generated by the RTA Fixed Costs Scheme and has been working towards getting stakeholder agreement on fixed success fees for Employers' Liability Compulsory Insurance (ELCI) cases run under Conditional Fee Agreements. It is hoped that this agreement will be implemented by October 2004.

Discussions with stakeholders will continue to consider fixed legal costs for ELCI claims.

Work-focused Interviews

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many benefit claimants have *(a)* been invited to attend work-focused interviews and *(b)* attended work-focused interviews in each year for which figures are available, broken down by category of claimant. [177535]

Jane Kennedy: Work-focused interviews are conducted nationally for lone parents as part of the lone parent work-focused interview regime and in integrated offices for all customer groups.

The information requested is in the following tables by calendar year:

Work-focused interviews booked—Integrated offices

Calendar year	Jobseeker	Lone parent	Sick and disabled	Carers	Other
2001	20,450	1,310	4,090	360	1,080
2002	131,610	10,500	28,710	3,460	6,600
2003	390,880	37,960	84,380	10,110	15,370
2004	88,980	9,310	19,040	2,210	3,050

Source:
Jobcentre Plus Database (to February 2004).

Work-focused interviews attended—Integrated offices

Calendar year	Jobseeker	Lone parent	Sick and disabled	Carers	Other
2001	19,510	1,280	3,970	440	1,040
2002	121,570	9,730	25,620	3,210	5,950
2003	356,470	34,950	75,890	9,350	13,930
2004	79,860	8,550	17,180	1,790	2,740

Source:
Jobcentre Plus Database (to February 2004).

Lone parent work-focused interviews—Non-integrated offices and stock

Calendar year	Booked New/Repeat	Attended Stock	Total	New/Repeat	Stock	Total
2001	68,560	36,260	104,820	58,290	25,790	84,090
2002	130,140	100,600	230,740	117,220	76,860	194,080
2003	178,410	182,930	361,340	159,610	161,300	320,910

Source:
NDLP evaluation database (data to December 2003).

Lorry Loader Cranes

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what health and safety regulations and guidance are in place governing the operation of lorry loader cranes. [176763]

Jane Kennedy: The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER), the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 all apply to the operation of lorry loader cranes. The Construction (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1996 also apply if the crane is being used in a place where construction activities are taking place, and the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 apply if the crane is being used in any other workplace. All of these Regulations are supported by guidance and, where relevant, approved codes of practice.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* fatal and *(b)* non-fatal accidents there were in each of the last five years involving lorry loader cranes. [176764]

Jane Kennedy: Incidents involving lorry loader cranes have only been separately available since 2001–02. The available statistics are set out in the table.

Table 1: The number of injuries involving lorry loader cranes, as reported to HSE and local authorities, 2001–02 to 2002–03

	Employee	Self employed	Public
	Fatal injuries		
2001–02	1	—	1
2002–03[1]	2	1	1
	Non-fatal injuries		
2001–02	484	7	4
2002–03[1]	462	12	3

[1] Provisional

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the Government plan to increase the current health and safety requirements for those who operate lorry loader cranes; and if he will make a statement. [176765]

Jane Kennedy: The Government have no plans at present to increase current health and safety requirements for those operating lorry loader cranes.

Ministerial Meetings

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the official meetings his predecessor had with the Mayor of London since July 2000 to discuss pension issues in London; and what the *(a)* dates and *(b)* subject of each meeting was. [174349]

Mr. Andrew Smith: There is no record of my predecessor, the right hon. Member for Edinburgh Central (Mr. Darling), holding any official meetings with the Mayor of London between July 2000 and May 2002.

Public Swimming Pools

Mr. John Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to introduce legislation to improve health and safety standards at public swimming pools. [177123]

Jane Kennedy: There are no plans to introduce additional legislation. The Health and Safety Executive is responsible for enforcement of health and safety legislation in Great Britain. In the autumn of 2003, it revised and republished the guidance on 'Managing health and safety in swimming pools'. The revision brings the guidance up-to-date with changes in health and safety law and new developments in equipment and facilities. This guidance provides practical advice on how to comply with the law relating to health and safety in swimming pools.

Stakeholder Pensions

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of small businesses with more than five employees that are complying with legislation to provide workers with access to a stakeholder pension. [167507]

Malcolm Wicks: Estimates of compliance levels since the introduction of stakeholder pensions have been based on cumulative quarterly data from the Association of British Insurers (ABI) that have now become out of date. More recent data from the 2003 Employers Pension Provision Survey and from the DTI Small Business Service has enabled us to update our estimate of the level of compliance with the requirement for employers with five or more staff to offer their workers access to a stakeholder pension scheme. On the basis of these we estimate the level of compliance as just over 80 per cent.

We will continue to work with employers so they are aware of the important role they play in helping their employees provide for their retirement. The Government believe that everyone should have the best information, support and opportunity to enable them to make informed choices about how they work and save to achieve their desired retirement income. The workplace is an important focal point for such activity. We will therefore work with employers to make it easier for them to promote good schemes in the workplace, to extend the issue of combined forecasts of state and private pension entitlement and to establish the best ways of ensuring that their employees have access to a decent standard of pension information.

Vulnerable Customers (Payments by Cheque)

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the written statement of 11 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 6–7WS, on vulnerable customers (payments by cheque), whether claimants who report late or missing payments will automatically be informed that emergency payments can be made to them both inside and outside of post office opening hours. [177436]

Mr. Pond: We will ensure that people get the money they are entitled to. Where a cheque payment does not arrive by the due payday, the customer should initially contact the office, which normally pays their benefit or pension. Arrangements for replacement payments will vary depending upon the individual circumstances and needs of each customer.

Paying by cheque is a well-established method of payment that the Department has used successfully since 1968. We already have procedures in place for dealing with missing payments. We will ensure they continue to meet the needs of those customers paid by cheque.

Customers reporting non-receipt of a cheque will be provided with all information and guidance they need about collection and cashing of replacement payments where this is appropriate.

WALES

Dentistry

11. **Bob Spink:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what recent discussions he has had with National Assembly for Wales Secretaries on funding for dentistry in Wales. [177364]

Mr. Hain: Health care in Wales, including dentistry, is a matter that I frequently discuss in my regular meetings with the Assembly First Minister.

Tax Credits

12. **Gareth Thomas:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what recent discussions he has had with ministerial colleagues on the take-up of tax credits in Wales. [177365]

Mr. Touhig: The take-up of tax credits has been successful in Wales. There were 245,000 families in Wales receiving tax credits on 5 April this year, and this includes almost 228,000 families with around 400,000 children.

NHS Waiting Times

13. **Miss McIntosh:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what recent discussions he has had with the First Minister of the National Assembly for Wales about progress in reducing NHS waiting times. [177366]

Mr. Hain: I regularly meet the Assembly First Minister and the health service in Wales is one of the topics that we frequently discuss.

Departmental Secondments

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many staff in his Department were seconded from the *(a)* private and *(b)* academic sector in each of the last three years. [175369]

Mr. Hain: There have been no inward secondments to the Wales Office from the private and academic sectors during the last three years.

Ministerial Visits

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many journeys were made by helicopter by each Minister in his Department and its predecessors in each of the last 10 years; and what the journey length was in each case. [175733]

Mr. Hain: In respect of overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The Government have also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Libraries of the House.

Since the establishment of the Wales Office in 1999, my predecessor and I have made a total of two helicopter flights:

in 2002, my predecessor had 30-minute flight from Cardiff to Swansea during an official visit to Wales of Commissioner Prodi; and

in 2003, I had a 15-minute demonstration flight as part of a ministerial visit to a Cardiff based helicopter company.

National Assembly

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what the cost of the Welsh Assembly to the public purse was estimated to be at the commencement of the project. [174033]

Mr. Hain: The Explanatory and Financial Memorandum to the Government of Wales Bill estimated that the additional running costs to the Assembly would be £15 to £20 million more than the costs of running the Welsh Office.

There has been no increase in the block grant to Wales to meet the additional costs of devolution.

Any additional administrative costs arising from devolution are a matter for the National Assembly for Wales.

Smoking Ban

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discussions he has had with the Health Secretary in the National Assembly for Wales on introducing a ban on smoking in public places in Wales. [177362]

Mr. Hain: My hon. Friend and I have regular discussions with colleagues across Government and with the Assembly about a number of issues, including those relating to smoking.

Welsh Language

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales whether it is his policy to propose that Welsh be awarded official language status within the European Union. [177367]

Mr. Touhig: At home they say Welsh is the language of Heaven. But I am afraid I have to disappoint the hon. Gentleman and tell him that there are no plans to make Welsh an official language of the European Union.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Directorships (FTSE 100)

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Minister for Women what plans she has for introducing *(a)* legislation and *(b)* other initiatives to encourage the appointment of more women as *(a)* executive directors and *(b)* non-executive directors to the boards of FTSE 100 companies; and if she will make a statement. [175927]

Ms Hewitt: Board appointments are a matter for companies and their nomination committees and shareholders. The Government recognises the need for all board members to be recruited on merit.

The Higgs Review drew attention to the importance of a rigorous selection process. As a consequence, the Financial Reporting Council (FRC)'s Combined Code, issued in July 2003 contains revised principles and provisions in this area.

Following publication of the Higgs and Tyson reports, a series of roundtable meetings were organised by my Department in partnership with several leading companies. This took forward discussion with Chairs, Chief Executives and senior figures from business, to raise awareness about the business case for greater diversity on boards and to gather examples of good practice.

We have also commissioned research to assess the current representation of directors from diverse backgrounds on FTSE 100 boards. This research has now been completed and will inform our thinking in this are which is one to which my right hon. Friend and I attach great importance.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 10 June 2004

TREASURY

Citizen Information Project

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) whether the Citizen Information Project will cover the whole of the UK; [177795]

(2) whether an independent statutory body will be established to administer the Citizen Information Project; [177796]

(3) what security measures are planned for the Citizen Information Project; [177797]

(4) how identity will be verified of individuals wishing to update information held on the Citizen Information Project; [177798]

(5) whether audit trails will be used on the Citizen Information Project as a means of checking security; and who will be responsible for checking this; [177799]

(6) what assessments have been made of the *(a)* size, *(b)* cost of setting up and *(c)* the time necessary to set up the Citizen Information Project; [177840]

(7) what adjustments have been made to the Citizen Information Project since the Cabinet agreement to establish a national identity database; [177841]

(8) what the purpose is of the Citizen Information Project. [177842]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the General Registrar for England and Wales, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Dennis Roberts to Mrs. Claire Curtis-Thomas, dated 10 June 2004:

The Registrar General for England and Wales has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions on the Citizen Information Project (CIP). I have been asked to reply in his absence. (177799, 177840, 177841, 177842, 177795, 177796, 177797 and 177798)

The objective of CIP is to create, for the public sector, the prime source of address and other core contact information relating to people usually resident in the UK. The feasibility study, conducted in 2003, indicated that the creation of a UK-wide population register could lead to cost and efficiency savings for the public sector.

With regard to the specific points you raise in relation to security, identity verification, governance and logistics of its potential setting up, all of these points are being considered during the project definition stage, which is currently running. It is scheduled to run until June 2005 at which point the Office for National Statistics will report back to Ministers with proposals for how CIP could be taken forward. Therefore, no decisions have been taken yet on the form in which it would develop but the latest thinking can be found in the evidence supplied by the Registrar General to the Home Affairs Committee on 27 April 2004.

The CIP project team continues to work closely with all relevant government departments and to ensure that the project takes account of developments elsewhere.

Historic Houses (Pre-owned Assets Tax)

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what research his Department has commissioned on the effect upon historic houses of the tax on pre-owned assets. [176462]

Dawn Primarolo: Owners of historic houses will not be affected unless they have engaged in tax avoidance of the sort targeted by the Government's proposals. If they have, they will have the option—under the proposals set out in the Finance Bill—to bring their property back within the scope of inheritance tax. And that in turn opens the way to claims in due course to the heritage exemption from inheritance tax, if the property is of suitable quality and the necessary commitment is made to provide public access.

Child Care

Tim Loughton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on what basis he intends not to extend tax credits for employing nannies providing child care to parents who use grandparents and other family members to look after their children. [178356]

Dawn Primarolo: The Government announced, on the 17 May, their proposals for consultation on the new Childcare Approval Scheme which will extend the types of good quality child care for which families can get financial support, such as the child care element of the working tax credit. The results of the consultation and the details of the scheme will be made known in due course.

Customs and Excise

Mr. Paice: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the future role of HM Customs and Excise at UK sea and airports after its investigation and intelligence work is brought under the control of the Serious and Organised Crime Agency. [177155]

John Healey: HM Customs and Excise's expertise in working at the borders to protect national security, collect revenue, facilitate trade and prevent smuggling will continue to play a vital role in the new integrated revenue department, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

Revenue from customs and excise duties, which raise almost £17 billion each year, are heavily dependent upon the protection afforded at the border. Equally important is the economic imperative to ensure that international trade is facilitated in a way that ensures the UK remains a good place to do business.

The nature of indirect taxes makes them more vulnerable to attack by fraudsters than direct taxes. Customs has developed strategies for countering such attacks which depend heavily upon their expertise in frontiers work, investigation, and disruption.

For these reasons HMRC will maintain its frontier role while working with the other agencies that undertake controls at UK borders. Following the creation of the Serious Organised Crime Agency,

HMRC will continue to deliver Customs' full range of import and export controls at the UK's frontiers, retaining intelligence resources to support the enforcement of prohibitions and restrictions.

Financial Services Authority

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the *(a)* estimated and *(b)* outturn set-up costs of the Financial Services Authority were, expressed in (i) capital expenditure and (ii) revenue expenditure terms;. [175267]

(2) how set-up costs of the Financial Services Authority were accounted for in the public finances;. [175268]

(3) what the overall outturn revenue expenditure of the Financial Services Authority was in each year since its establishment;. [175269]

(4) if he will list those bodies whose responsibilities were taken on by the Financial Services Authority as successor; and what the outturn revenue expenditure for each of those bodies was in the final three years of their operation. [175270]

Ruth Kelly: For the purposes of this response, 1 December 2001 ("N2") has been taken as the date the Financial Services Authority (FSA) was established, when the FSA was granted its full powers under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000. The FSA's financial year ends on 31 March.

Estimated set-up running costs of the Financial Services Authority (FSA) were £14 million (FSA's annual reports for financial years 1999–00 and 2000–01). Outturn set-up running costs, relating to the new organisational structure of the FSA, were £13.2 million. A further £1.8 million was incurred in relation to the transfer of the UK Listing Authority function from the London Stock Exchange, which was not included in the original estimate. These costs were recovered from FSA fee-payers during the three years including and following N2 and so were not accounted for in the public finances.

In 1998–99, the FSA also incurred capital expenditure of approximately £37 million, to prepare the FSA's new premises in Canary Wharf, London. Annual depreciation is also being included in the amount charged to FSA fee-payers and is not accounted for in the public finances.

The overall outturn expenditure of the FSA since it was established (N2) was £69.1 million in the remainder of 2001–02, and £203.1 million in 2002–03. In addition, a £2 million deficit reduction contribution was made in 2002–03 to finance the FSA's pension scheme shortfall. The responsibilities of the bodies the FSA took on as successor, and the outturn expenditure of these bodies for the three financial years of their operation up to and including N2, is shown in the table as follows. In addition, the FSA took responsibility for the UK Listing Authority function from the London Stock Exchange on 1 May 2000. Between 1 May 2000 and N2, FSA outturn expenditure in relation to this function was £17.7 million.

£

Name of body and/or relevant responsibility of body	*Outturn expenditure for 1999–2000*	*Outturn expenditure for 2000–01*	*Outturn expenditure for April 2001–02*	*Total*
Investment Management Regulatory Organisation (IMRO)	18.6	16.6	11.7	46.9
Personal Investment Authority (PIA)	44.0	39.9	27.1	111.0
Securities and Futures Authority (SFA)	32.8	33.0	21.2	87.0
Securities and Investments Boards (SIB) (Supervision of banks)[1]	50.2	50.8	35.3	136.3
Securities and Investments Board (SIB) (other regulatory responsibilities)	15.3	15.6	13.7	44.6
HM Treasury Insurance Directors[2]	12.8	5.6	11.4	39.8
Registry of Friendly Societies (RFS) (including the Building Societies Commission (BSC) and Friendly Societies Commission (FSC))	7.8	8.2	[3]8.4	16

[1] Supervision of banks transferred from the Bank of England to the Securities and Investments Board (SIB) on 1 June 1998.
[2] Figures for FSA service charge to HM Treasury.
[3] Budget forecast for full financial year 2001–02. The Registry of Friendly Societies (RFS) was wound up in December 2001.

HIPC Process

John Barrett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps he is taking to assist those countries which are predicted to exit the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries process with unsustainable debt. [177419]

John Healey: The UK fully supports the cancellation of debt of the world's poorest countries through the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative. The UK was instrumental in securing international agreement to enhance the original Initiative in 1999, to ensure that as much debt relief as possible is granted to as many countries as possible. The UK continues to be a champion of the HIPC Initiative. We have provided commitments of £2.3 billion of debt relief to eligible countries and have pledged a total of US$474 million through multilateral institutions to support the Initiative further. The UK goes even further than is required under the Initiative, and is committed to providing 100 per cent. debt relief to eligible HIPC countries.

The HIPC Initiative is delivering real benefits to participating countries. It is providing over $70 billion of debt relief to the 27 counties which have reached Decision Point. It is helping increase annual social expenditure in countries receiving debt relief. Total social spending has increased by around $4 billion since 1999—equivalent to 2.7 per cent. of GDP. On average, health and education spending account for 65 per cent. of the use of HIPC debt relief.

However, there are countries forecast to exit the Initiative with debt-to-export ratios above the HIPC target of 150 per cent. because of factors beyond their control. The UK continues to push for additional relief to be granted to these countries at Completion Point

("topping up" relief). We successfully campaigned for Niger and Ethiopia to receive such additional relief, resulting in over $800 million in additional relief for two of the world's poorest countries.

The UK also continues to lobby for a change in the topping up methodology to maximise the quantum of topping up relief. At present, the additional bilateral assistance (ABA) granted by some countries—including the G7—is included when calculating the amount of additional relief to be provided at Completion Point. We are pressing for this ABA to be excluded from this calculation, which could increase the quantum of debt relief delivered to HIPCs by around $1 billion.

We are also working closely with the IMF and World Bank as they finalise a new debt sustainability framework, which will govern all lending decisions for low-income countries, including those that have participated in HIPC. When operational, this framework will ensure that sufficient official finance is provided in the right blend of grants and highly concessional lending to aid future development without threatening long-term debt sustainability prospects.

However, all low-income countries will need additional aid to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This is why the UK has proposed the International Finance Facility (IFF), which could provide the much-needed substantial increase in aid—in the form of grants, concessional loans, or further debt—needed to attain the MDGs without threatening the long-term debt sustainability of the world's poorest countries.

Income Tax (Pensioners)

Ms Walley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many senior citizens in Stoke-on-Trent, North qualified for the 10p rate of income tax in each year since its introduction. [177635]

Dawn Primarolo: All income tax payers benefit from the 10p starting rate. The Survey of Personal Incomes estimates that there are about 3,000 state retirement pension age taxpayers in the Stoke-on-Trent, North constituency in 2000–01 and 2001–02. Estimates should be treated with caution because of sampling variation. Figures for 1999–2000 are currently not available.

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many senior citizens in the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale qualified for the 10 pence rate of income tax in each year since its introduction; and what percentage were *(a)* women and *(b)* of Asian origin. [178544]

Dawn Primarolo: All income tax payers benefit from the 10 pence starting rate. The Survey of Personal Incomes (SPI) estimates that there are around 5,000 state retirement pension age tax payers in the Rochdale constituency in 2001–02. The sample size of pensioners living in the Rochdale constituency is relatively small compared to other constituencies so a reliable estimate cannot be given for 2000–01. Figures for 1999–2000 are currently not available.

The sample size of women pensioners living in the Rochdale consistuency is too small to provide a reliable estimate in any year. Information on ethnic origin is not available on the Survey of Personal Incomes.

Estimates should be treated with caution because of sampling variation.

Large Business Office

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* full and *(b)* part-time staff have been employed by the Large Business Office in each year since 1997. [174938]

Dawn Primarolo: Figures for 1999–2000 onwards are:

	Full-time	*Part-time*	*Total*
1999–2000	636	44	680
2000–01	675	44	719
2001–02	707	79	786
2002–03	742	92	834
2003–04	763	91	854

It may be possible to ascertain figures for earlier years, but these are not held centrally and could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost.

National Insurance Contributions

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the total gross national insurance contributions by *(a)* employers, *(b)* employees and *(c)* the self-employed as a proportion of GDP for 2007–08. [177883]

John Healey: Estimates are given in the table.

Group	*Contribution classes*	*Gross NICs as a proportion of money GDP in 2007–08 (UK) (per cent.)*
(a) employers	1 (secondary), 1A, 1B	4.5
(b) employees	1 (primary), 3	3.0
(c) self-employed	2,4	0.3
Total	All	7.7

Gross National Insurance contributions are estimated by Government Actuary's Department. Estimates of money GDP in 2007–08 are published in the Financial Statement and Budget Report 2004.

Population (UK)

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total projected population of the UK is for each of the next 10 years. [177909]

Ruth Kelly: The Government Actuary's latest national population projections, based on the estimated population at the middle of 2002, are available from the GAD website at: http://www.gad.gov.uk/Population/index.asp?v=Principal&y=2002&subYear=Continue

Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what sums have been paid to the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors in each of the last five years. [177599]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 10 June 2004]*: The Treasury does not keep central records of payments by Government to particular organisations. However, the Treasury itself has paid the following sums to the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors in the following of the last five years:

	£
1999–2000	210
2000–01	160
2003–04	890

Sefton

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on population levels in Sefton over the last 10 years. [177838]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from John Pullinger to Mrs. Curtis-Thomas, dated 10 June 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your question concerning the population levels in Sefton over the last 10 years. I am replying in his absence. (177838)

The total population for Sefton has decreased steadily from 292,400 in mid-1992 to 281, 700 in mid-2002. This represents a decrease of 3.4 per cent. Changes in population can be attributed to a combination of 'natural change' and 'migration and other changes'. In most years it is 'natural change' that is the most important factor for Sefton, with an excess of deaths over births. Over the 10 years as a whole, natural change accounted for 71 per cent. of the decrease. Figures for each year can be found in the attached table.

Mid-1992 to mid-2000 population estimates are interim revised population estimates. They are subject to revision.

Total population and population change for Sefton (1992 to 2002)

	Population at start	*Natural change*	*Migration and other changes*[1]	*Population at end*
1991–92	292,900	-100	-400	292,400
1992–93	292,400	-500	-300	291,600
1993–94	291,600	-700	-1,200	289,700
1994–95	289,700	-600	-900	288,300
1995–96	288,300	-700	-800	286,700
1996–97	286,700	-700	-0	285,900
1997–98	285,900	-700	-500	284,700
1998–99	284,700	-900	-0	283,800
1999–2000	283,800	-900	300	283,200
2000–01	283,200	-900	600	282,900
2001–02	282,900	-1000	-200	281,700

[1] "Migration and other changes" encompasses net migration, Armed Forces, Foreign Armed Forces Dependents, School Boarders, Prisoners, Asylum Seekers and Visitor Switches, an adjustment to reconcile differences between Censuses and an adjustment for any possible boundary changes.

Note:

Figures may not add exactly due to rounding.

Source:

Office for National Statistics

Taxation (Wales)

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much money was raised through taxes in Wales in each of the last 10 years. [177351]

Dawn Primarolo: The following table from the ONS 2002 publication of household income shows estimates of income taxes, council taxes and vehicle taxes paid by households in Wales and the United Kingdom for the period 1995 to 1999. These figures were produced by ONS for the estimation of sub-national gross disposable household income and were published in March 2002.

Estimate of taxes paid by households[1]

£ million

	1995	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*
Wales	3,062	3,036	3,068	3,384	3,743
United Kingdom	86,527	87,932	89,734	106,069	113,455

[1] Taxes paid by households and non-profit institutions serving households

No corresponding information is available on taxes paid by organisations although an estimate of the VAT paid was given in my answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Wrexham (Ian Lucas) on 16 December 2002, *Official Report*, column 613W.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Housing Stock

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total costs of grants to Arm's Length Management Organisations, and the amount paid to each, has been since 1999. [176757]

Keith Hill: The Housing Revenue Account Subsidy paid to local authorities which have set up qualifying Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) to manage and improve their housing stock includes an allowance to support borrowing by the local authorities for capital expenditure by their ALMOs. This allowance was first paid in 2002–03. The sums paid to each qualifying local authority in 2002–03 and 2003–04 are tabled as follows:

	ALMO allowance (£)	
Local authority	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Round 1 ALMOs		
Ashfield	1,012,603	2,400,000
Derby	1,312,164	3,110,000
Hounslow	1,179,452	3,500,000
Kirklees	1,917,808	6,250,000
Rochdale	835,397	2,420,000
Stockton-on-Tees	1,353,288	4,450,000
Westminster	745,260	2,030,000
Wigan	1,788,932	5,830,000
Round 2 ALMOs		
Barnsley	—	1,856,885
Blyth Valley	—	1,329,235
Bolton	—	2,619,654
Brent	—	2,342,213
Carrick	—	109,098
Cheltenham	—	422,131
Hillingdon	—	86,175
Kensington and Chelsea	—	1,580,334
Leeds—North East	—	447,072

Local authority	ALMO allowance (£) 2002-03	2003-04
Leeds—West	—	778,210
Oldham	—	3,033,211
Total	10,144,904	44,594,218

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will place in the Library the evidence he has collated on the benefits that arise from *(a)* separating housing management from housing strategy and *(b)* the financial effect of the separation. [177007]

Keith Hill: The Audit Commission's Best Value Inspection Reports indicate that stock owning local authorities primarily see their housing role as that of a landlord. This reduces their focus on strategic housing functions. In explaining why they had published best practice on how local authorities that had transferred their stock deliver their strategic housing role, the Audit Commission said that:

"Having set up a housing association to run its rented homes, a council is able to concentrate on area-based regeneration, including private sector housing. In other areas, councils have used stock transfer as an opportunity to work more effectively with planning services to provide more affordable housing and more mixed-tenure developments".

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not have information of the financial effects of the separation of strategic and landlord services.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much investment to fund stock improvements has been secured via transfer, private finance initiative and Arm's Length Management Organisations since the Housing Green Paper was published in 2000, broken down by local authority; and how much of the backlog of repairs and improvement remains to be funded. [176756]

Keith Hill: The following tables show the level of additional investment secured by ALMO PFI and LSVT since 2000.

These figures do not include mainstream housing funding paid to stock owning local authorities including those that have established ALMOs or PFI contracts.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is not in a position to update or estimate the reduction since 2001 of the repairs and improvement backlog until we have sufficient data from the English House Condition Survey, the next report of which will be published by the end of this year.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister needs this independent assessment, as we cannot determine the remaining backlog by simply deducting the sums spent from the previous backlog estimate. This is because the expenditure is used both to reduce the backlog and to stop the backlog increasing.

LSVT

Authority	Date of transfer	Private investment (£ million)
Manchester CC (Colshaw Farm)	14 February 2000	30.00
North Devon DC	21 February 2000	70.00
LB Hackney* Stamford Hill	6 March 2000	35.00
LB Hackney* Pembury Estate	6 March 2000	33.90
Burnley BC	8 March 2000	45.00
Manchester CC Sale Estate	20 March 2000	23.00
Weymouth and Portland C	20 March 2000	55.00
Huntingdon DC	20 March 2000	95.00
Elmbridge BC	27 March 2000	93.00
Test Valley BC	27 March 2000	111.00
Wyre Forest DC	27 March 2000	80.00
Manchester CC Whitefield Estate	27 March 2000	20.00
LB Tower Hamlets* THCH	27 March 2000	45.00
Tameside MBC	27 March 2000	213.00
LB Richmond	17 July 2000	173.00
Coventry CC	22 September 2000	240.00
Fylde BC	2 October 2000	30.00
Chester CC	27 November 2000	90.00
Horsham DC	11 December 2000	100.00
LB Tower Hamlets* Poplar I	12 February 2001	33.00
East Northamptonshire DC	19 February 2001	60.00
Torbay BC	19 February 2001	50.00
Staffordshire Moorlands DC	23 February 2001	50.00
Calderdale MBC	6 March 2001	112.00
Chichester DC	13 March 2001	120.00
Mendip DC	19 March 2001	70.00
West Wiltshire DC	26 March 2001	100.00
West Oxfordshire DC	26 March 2001	75.00
East Staffordshire BC	26 March 2001	62.00
Manchester CC Handforth Estate	26 March 2001	17.00
Sunderland CC	26 March 2001	425.00
Blackburn with Darwen BC	28 March 2001	85.00
Shrewsbury and Atcham BC	1 October 2001	82.00
Mid-Bedfordshire DC	5 November 2001	50.00

LSVT

Authority	*Date of transfer*	*Private investment (£ million)*
Derbyshire Dales	4 March 2002	59.00
Chelmsford BC	11 March 2002	145.00
East Hertfordshire DC	18 March 2002	50.00
DC		57.00
Erewash BC	25 March 2002	99.00
Reigate and Banstead BC	25 March 2002	105.50
St. Edmundsbury	24 June 2002	91.00
Vale Royal BC	1 July 2002	90.00
St. Helens MBC	1 July 2002	129.00
Redcar and Cleveland BC	15 July 2002	180.00
Knowsley MBC	15 July 2002	180.00
LB Waltham Forest	30 September 2002	175.00
LB Hackney cc sheltered stock	14 October 2002	25.00
LB Harrow	14 October 2002	55.00
Manchester cc Langley Estate	18 November 2002	28.00
County of Herefordshire C	25 November 2002	63.00
Carlisle CC	9 December 2002	63.50
Rushcliffe BC	20 January 2003	55.00
Liverpool CC Eastern Fringe (south)	23 January 2003	25.50
Liverpool CC Eastern Fringe (central)	30 January 2003	17.50
City of Bradford	24 February 2003	245.10
Amber Valley BC	24 February 2003	94.00
Crewe and Nantwich BC	10 March 2003	54.00
Liverpool CC Eastern fringe (north)	10 March 2003	64.50
Oldham MBC Limeside (Hollins/The Avenues)	17 March 2003	12.00
Walsall MBC (majority of stock)	27 March 2003	213.00
Walsall MBC (tenant managed stock)	27 March 2003	7.20
Craven DC	31 March 2003	15.00
Forest of Dean DC	31 March 2003	50.00
North Hertfordshire DC	31 March 2003	182.00
Manchester CC (East Manchester)	8 September 2003	25.00
Scarborough BC	15 December 2003	43.00
Maidstone BC	2 February 2004	50.00
Teignbridge	4 February 2004	45.00
Oldham MBC Fitton Hill	15 March 2004	8.50
Cherwell	29 March 2004	50.00
Bromsgrove	29 March 2004	49.00
Hartlepool	29 March 2004	65.00
Liverpool (Kensington)	29 March 2004	19.00
Worcester	31 March 2004	55.00
South Norfolk	17 May 2004	55.00
Total		5,118.30

Local authority	*ALMO allowance (£) 2002-03*	*2003-04*
Round 1 ALMOs		
Ashfield	1,012,603	2,400,000
Derby	1,312,164	3,110,000
Hounslow	1,179,452	3,500,000
Kirklees	1,917,808	6,250,000
Rochdale	835,397	2,420,000
Stockton-on-Tees	1,353,288	4,450,000
Westminster	745,260	2,030,000
Wigan	1,788,932	5,830,000
Round 2 ALMOs		
Barnsley	—	1,856,885
Blyth Valley	—	1,329,235
Bolton	—	2,619,654
Brent	—	2,342,213
Carrick	—	109,098
Cheltenham	—	422,131
Hillingdon	—	86,175
Kensington and Chelsea	—	1,580,334
Leeds—North East	—	447,072
Leeds—West	—	778,210
Oldham	—	3,033,211
Total	10,144,904	44,594,218

PFI

Authority	*PFI credits (£ million)*
Manchester	36.64
Islington	74.69
Reading	49.65
Total	160.98

Housing Stock Transfers

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how much was paid per home to each local authority by the organisation taking over responsibility for housing where a large-scale voluntary transfer has taken place since 2001; and how many homes were involved in each case; [176707]

(2) what *(a)* the total amount paid to the local authority and *(b)* the average payment per house by the registered social landlords taking over the stock in each large-scale transfer in the last four years is. [177006]

Keith Hill: To reflect the intended continued use of the properties for social housing and the need for capital

investment, the price paid to each local authority per council house accords with a tenanted market value (TMV) rather than an open market value. The following table shows the price paid per dwelling, the gross transfer price and the number of dwellings involved in large-scale voluntary transfers in the last four years. The amounts were calculated in accordance with this valuation method.

Local Authority	*Date of Transfer*	*Number of dwellings*	*Price per dwelling*	*Gross transfer price (£ million)*
LB Richmond	17 July 2000	7,139	8,335	59.50
Coventry CC	22 September 2000	20,125	2,460	49.50
Fylde BC	2 October 2000	1,905	6,300	12.00
Chester CC	27 November 2000	7,096	6,341	45.00
Horsham DC	11 December 2000	4,650	14,462	67.25
LB Tower Hamlets Poplar 1	12 February 2001	1,859	0	Grant 35.22
East Northamptonshire DC	19 February 2001	3,495	6,150	21.49
Torbay BC	19 February 2001	2,947	6,480	19.10
Staffordshire Moorlands DC	23 February 2001	3,132	6,290	19.67
Calderdale MBC	6 March 2001	12,759	2,825	36.00
Chichester DC	13 March 2001	5,321	14,752	78.50
Mendip DC	19 March 2001	4,326	8,091	35.00
West Wiltshire DC	26 March 2001	3,284	6,423	21.00
West Oxfordshire DC	26 March 2001	3,643	13,972	50.90
East Staffordshire BC	26 March 2001	5,637	3,643	24.50
Manchester CC Handforth Estate	26 March 2001	659	535	0.37
Sunderland CC	26 March 2001	36,356	6,045	219.80
Blackburn with Darwen BC	28 March 2001	9,886	4,195	35.40
Shrewsbury and Atcham BC	1 October 2001	5,500	11,527	63.40
Mid-Bedfordshire DC	5 November 2001	3,084	10,159	31.33
Derbyshire Dales	4 March 2002	3,287	7,616	24.80
Chelmsford BC	11 March 2002	6,902	11,530	79.60
East Hertfordshire	18 March 2002	2,687	11,937	32.10
East Hertfordshire	(two transfers to separate RSLs)	3,237	13,725	44.40
Erewash BC	25 March 2002	5,847	6,460	38.10
Reigate and Banstead BC	25 March 2002	4,846	13,212	64.00
St. Edmundsbury	24 June 2002	5,947	7,489	45.10
Vale Royal BC	1 July 2002	6,813	7,462	51.07
St. Helens MBC	1 July 2002	14,632	1,974	28.90
Redcar and Cleveland BC	15 July 2002	11,625	5,180	60.20
Knowsley MBC	15 July 2002	17,090	1,794	30.66
LB Waltham Forest	30 September 2002	2,242	832	1.87
LB Hackney CC sheltered stock	14 October 2002	954	0	0.00
LB Harrow	14 October 2002	518	0	0.00
Manchester CC Langley Estate	18 November 2002	3,360	0	0.00
County of Herefordshire C	25 November 2002	5,696	6,945	39.56
Carlisle CC	9 December 2002	7,198	1,803	12.98
Rushcliffe BC	20 January 2003	3,445	12,934	44.56
Liverpool CC eastern fringe (south)	23 January 2003	2,833	1,800	5.10
Liverpool CC eastern fringe (central)	30 January 2003	3,702	0	0.00
City of Bradford	24 February 2003	24,764	2,831	70.10
Amber Valley BC	24 February 2003	5,632	5,077	28.57
Crewe and Nantwich BC	10 March 2003	5,515	6,181	34.10
Liverpool CC eastern fringe north	10 March 2003	6,183	0	0.00
Oldham MBC Limeside (Hollins/the Avenues)	17 March 2003	634	0	0.00
Walsall MBC (majority of stock)	27 March 2003	22,971	1,026	24.00
Walsall MBC (tenant managed stock)	27 March 2003	1,828	0	0.00
Craven DC	31 March 2003	1,541	5,201	17.60
Forest of Dean DC	31 March 2003	3,577	6,849	24.50
North Hertfordshire DC	31 March 2003	8,570	3,128	27.00
Manchester CC (east Manchester)	8 September 2003	2,823	0	0.00
Scarborough BC	15 December 2003	4,632	5,232	24.25
Maidstone BC	2 February 2004	6,810	5,685	35.82
Teignbridge	4 February 2004	3,647	3,651	12.90
Oldham MBC Fitton Hill	15 March 2004	1,285	0	0.00
Cherwell	29 March 2004	3,656	7,397	42.85
Bromsgrove	29 March 2004	3,096	5,218	16.50
Hartlepool	29 March 2004	7,509	427	3.20
Liverpool (Kensington)	29 March 2004	289	0	0.00
Worcester	31 March 2004	4,714	1,128	5.31
South Norfolk	17 May 2004	4,214	7,499	31.60

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much has been paid in dowry and gap funding to local authorities to undertake large-scale voluntary stock transfers since 1999. [176758]

Keith Hill: Estates Renewal Challenge Fund dowry payments of £165.264 million and £81.142 million were made in 1999–2000 and 2000–01 respectively.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidelines he gives to registered social landlords taking over council property in large-scale voluntary transfers; and what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of tenant representation in existing registered social landlords. [177008]

Keith Hill: The Housing Transfer Manual 2003 Programme provides guidance on housing transfer and sets out the procedure by which an authority should make an application to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. We require Registered Social Landlords to discuss the implications of transfer with the Housing Corporation who published their new registration criteria registration with the Housing Corporation in April 2004. This gives guidance which covers stock transfer applicants seeking to become registered social landlords.

The Housing Corporation sets out the requirements and expectations for tenant representation in existing Registered Social Landlords in paragraph 2.5 of its Regulatory Code and Guidance. Failure to meet these requirements will be reflected in the Housing Corporation assessment of the Registered Social Landlord.

The need to ensure effective tenant representation has been further emphasised in the recent Housing Corporation publication, "Involvement Policy for the Housing Association Sector". This came into effect in April 2004 and brings together two of the Housing Corporation's previous documents—"Making Consumers Count" and "Communities in Control."

This revised resident involvement policy sets out clearly what residents, and the Housing Corporation as regulator, can expect from housing associations, i.e.:

all housing associations should clearly show how their services have been influenced by comments and feedback from the people living in their homes;

all associations are expected to be able to show that responsiveness to residents' views runs through all their activities. That it is part of their culture and the way they deliver services; and

all associations are expected to work with their residents to decide the best ways of involving them, taking account of their preferences and circumstances.

The Housing Corporation seeks residents' views on emerging policies in a variety of ways:

working with a wide range of representative bodies of tenants and residents;

maintaining a database of 'interested tenants' who have indicated that they are prepared to be involved in giving feedback on the Housing Corporation's developing policies and on the consultation papers issued from time to time;

conducting a major national tenants' survey every three years covering 10,000 tenants. The next survey is due this year;

providing grants to support conferences of residents at both national and regional level; and

holding regular meeting with the Housing Ombudsman.

The Corporation has asked the Audit Commission, as part of its joint programme of research, to look at the costs and benefits of resident involvement and to consider the evidence that involvement does in fact make good business sense. A report of the study, "Improving Services Through Resident Involvement", will be launched at the Chartered Institute of Housing conference in June 2004.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of the costs of *(a)* consultation, *(b)* publicity material and *(c)* surveys connected with (i) successful and (ii) unsuccessful tenant ballots on large-scale voluntary transfer or establishment of an arm's length management organisation was met by (A) local government, (B) housing associations, (C) arm's length management organisations and (D) central Government. [177015]

Keith Hill: All local authorities are required to produce Business Plans that set out medium/long-term plans for addressing the investment needs of their council housing and improving the quality of services provided to tenants. The guidance provided to authorities highlights the importance of carrying out robust option appraisals as a part of this, to ensure that resources are used effectively and, where additional resources are needed, that the best option for delivering decent homes is identified. Therefore, the cost is met by local authorities, as all work on options appraisals including consultation, publicity material and surveys etc. is funded by the local authority, as the work should be undertaken as part of their Business Plan.

Arm's Length Management Organisations and housing associations are at the end of the process of options appraisal undertaken by local authorities, and so do not fund any of the consultation with tenants on the three options.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will estimate the total cost to central Government of transferring council housing to registered social landlords and Arm's Length Management Organisations in the financial years *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04, separately identifying (i) the total debt written off, (ii) the cost of dowry and gap funding, (iii) the cost of paying tenant housing benefit by social security, (iv) the cost of consultancies, literature, videos and surveys and (v) the cost of staff time at (A) national and (B) regional levels; and how many houses have been transferred. [177153]

Keith Hill: In 2002–03, £440 million of debt was written off for local authorities transferring their housing stock; there was no dowry or gap funding in this year. 167,000 homes were transferred to registered social landlords. Arms Length Management Organisations received £10 million funding that year.

In 2003–04, £90 million of debt was written off for local authorities transferring their housing stock; there was no dowry or gap funding in this year. 42,000 homes were transferred.

Arm's Length Management Organisations received £45 million funding that year.

The additional information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Ancient Trees

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what action her Department is taking to ensure that ancient trees are identified for inclusion in biodiversity action plans; [173941]

(2) what action her Department is taking to ensure that ancient trees are fully identified and mapped for the purposes of inclusion in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. [173942]

Mr. Bradshaw: Sites with ancient or veteran trees are being recorded through a variety of different mechanisms. Some are Sites of Special Scientific Interest and a number of the best areas have gone forward as Special Areas of Conservation under the EU Habitats and Species Directive (including the New Forest, Burnham Beeches, Epping Forest, Windsor Great Park, Richmond Park, Sherwood Forest).

Surveys to identify other sites for veteran trees, that may have been over-looked in the past, are under way, including recent work in Scotland and in the East Midlands of England. The Forestry Commission are planning to start the next National Inventory of Woodland and Trees later this year. The methods to be used are being finalised over the next few months and it is expected that the inventory will provide estimates of the overall abundance of veteran trees in woodland.

The most important concentrations of ancient or veteran trees across the countryside tend to be associated with wood-pastures (old parks, commons and the former royal hunting forests). The UK Wood-pasture and Parkland Habitat Action Plan is led by English Nature, who are developing the Wood-pasture and Parkland Information System (www.wapis.org.uk) that will enable both biological and historical data about these important sites to be brought together.

The National Inventory cannot be expected to pick up every one of the many thousands of individual veteran trees that exist within Britain, in field corners, hedges or along riverbanks. There is scope, therefore, for voluntary efforts such as by local tree wardens and through the Woodland Trust/Ancient Tree Forum's Ancient Tree Hunt to complement the work of the Government Departments and agencies. We welcome such voluntary sector contributions. We would encourage individuals and voluntary bodies to use the Wood-pasture and Parkland Information System to widen our knowledge and understanding and help make the information readily available through the National Biodiversity Network.

Animal By-products

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent estimate she has made of the cost to retailers of the Animal By-products Regulation 2003. [177396]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Animal By-Products Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) estimated that the cost to retailers for disposing of raw meat and raw fish is between £4 and £45 a week depending on the size of the store and the amount of waste generated by the store. No more recent estimate has been made.

Cattle

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 25 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1486W, on cattle, how much of the total cost of running the cattle tracing scheme will be paid by farmers; and if she will make a statement. [176706]

Alun Michael: We recently deferred the introduction of Cattle Tracing System charging from 1 April 2004 and are currently reviewing a range of options on the level of cost recovery.

Correspondence

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for what reasons she has not replied to the letter of 27 November 2003 from Mr. Jim Morrison, President of the Aluminium Federation on the problems of the export of waste under the Transfrontier Shipment of Waste Regulations 1994; and if she will make a statement. [174996]

Margaret Beckett: *[holding answer 27 May 2004]*: My Department has no record of having received this letter. A copy was recently passed to me by my hon. Friend. A follow-up letter of 19 May has been received recently. I have now written to Mr. Morrison, addressing the issues that he raised.

Fallen Stock

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the Master of Fox Hounds Association about whether hunt kennels will continue to collect fallen stock in the event of a ban on hunting. [176782]

Alun Michael: The Department has included the Master of Fox Hounds Association in discussions about arrangements for a National Fallen Stock Scheme and has registered a substantial level of interest from hunt kennels in joining the scheme. This suggests that many are willing to make the necessary investment to continue in business for the disposal of fallen stock whatever the future for hunting.

Grain Stockpiles

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) how much grain was held on world stockpiles in each of the last 30 years; [177411]

(2) how many days' worth of global consumption of grain was held on world stockpiles in each of the last 30 years. [177412]

Alun Michael: The Government do not collect global grain stock or consumption statistics but the following information is publicly available from supply and demand balance sheets compiled by the United States Department of Agriculture.

	World stocks[1] (million tonnes)	Days supply[2]
1974–75	170	64
1975–76	180	67
1976–77	241	85
1977–78	233	79
1978–79	278	90
1979–80	274	86
1980–81	255	80
1981–82	281	87
1982–83	332	101
1983–84	278	84
1984–85	340	99
1985–86	421	123
1986–87	469	132
1987–88	420	115
1988–89	336	95
1989–90	318	86
1990–91	366	98
1991–92	356	95
1992–93	395	104
1993–94	362	96
1994–95	358	93
1995–96	317	84
1996–97	366	93
1997–98	412	104
1998–99	444	112
1999–2000	439	110
2000–01	415	103
2001–02	396	97
2002–03	332	81
2003–04	251	60

[1] Ending stock for year in question.
[2] Ending stock divided by total daily consumption.

Public Rights of Way

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures she is taking to develop a strategy for establishing connected-up networks of public rights of way in the North West. [177088]

Alun Michael: The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 requires all local highway authorities to prepare rights of way improvement plans. This requirement is intended to encourage authorities to take a strategic look at their rights of way networks, with a view to providing better for the needs of users—this includes planning for better joined-up networks. The Government have provided additional funding for the preparation of these plans.

TRANSPORT

Middle Lanes

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what survey work has been undertaken to gauge how often the middle lane is used on three-lane roads and motorways when not overtaking a vehicle in the left lane. [178006]

Mr. Jamieson: My Department is not aware of any such survey work. In order to produce meaningful results, a survey into lane usage would need to be widely based and would be labour intensive and costly. My Department is working to improve lane discipline and to reduce the annoyance that poor lane discipline causes.

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if his Department will run a campaign to educate motorists when using multi-lane roads and motorways to use the left lane and only to use other lanes for overtaking; and if he will make a statement. [178007]

Mr. Jamieson: Poor lane discipline does cause annoyance and can reduce road capacity. We are working to improve lane discipline. It is safe driving practice for vehicles using motorways to keep in the left-hand lane unless overtaking, and this advice is reflected in the Highway Code and the Driving Manual. The Theory Test includes questions on motorway lane discipline and the Department produces a leaflet, 'A Guide to Safer Motorway Driving'. Police motorway patrols can, where they think appropriate, pull up motorists for poor lane discipline, and indeed can prosecute where the motorist's behaviour amounts to inconsiderate driving.

Also, the Highways Agency is currently exploring the possibility of using the variable message signs on motorways (VMS) to encourage lane discipline, alongside their present use for early warning to motorists about traffic queues ahead and advice on diversion routes.

We will keep the issue under review, and will further strengthen the actions described, and reshape our information programmes as required.

Transport (Manchester, Central)

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of new cycle lanes have been provided using public funds in Manchester, Central since 1997. [177695]

Mr. McNulty: A total of 2.7 miles of new cycle lanes have been provided in Manchester Central since 1997.

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of priority bus lanes have been created in Manchester, Central since 1997. [177696]

Mr. McNulty: A total of 1.5 miles of priority bus lanes have been created in Manchester Central since 1997.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Magistrates Courts (Totnes)

Mr. Steen: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the cost to public funds was of replacing two doors to the cells at Totnes magistrates court; and when these cells were last used. [177652]

Mr. Leslie: The two cells doors were replaced during April 2002. The cost of doing so was £3,036.00.

Shortly after the works were completed the Magistrates Courts Committee's (MCC) decided to centralise remand cases across the MCC area. While the cells at Totnes magistrates court have since no longer been used on a regular basis, as part of the MCCs contingency planning the cells are maintained in a condition which, if circumstances demand, means they could be used in an emergency.

Corporate Legal Expenses Insurance

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what discussions he has had with the Bar over the proposal for mandatory corporate legal expenses insurance; and if he will make a statement. [177814]

Mr. Lammy: The Bar has proposed a scheme for compulsory corporate insurance to cover legal costs arising when company officers and directors are accused of commercial fraud, in order to free up legal aid funding for other priorities. This idea is being considered in the context of the Fundamental Legal Aid Review currently being carried out by my Department. The review will report to Ministers early next year.

SCOTLAND

Govan Shipyard

Mr. Blunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) on which dates in 1999 the former Secretary of State met Mr. George Simpson of GEC; if he will publish minutes of the meetings; and if he will list the attendees at those meetings; [174304]

(2) what communications *(a)* the former Secretary of State and *(b)* his representatives and advisers had in 1999 with GEC over *(a)* the proposed merger of BAE-GEC and *(b)* Govan shipyard; and if he will publish the communications; [174305]

(3) what *(a)* meetings and *(b)* communications the (i) former Secretary of State and (ii) his representatives and advisers had with Kvaerner, their representatives and advisers over the proposed closure of the Govan shipyard in 1999; on what dates meetings were held; and if he will publish the communications; [174306]

(4) what meetings his Department held with management of Govan/Kvaerner to discuss the future of the Govan shipyard in 1999; [174307]

(5) what briefings the former Secretary of State *(a)* gave and *(b)* received in 1999 on the GEC interest in the Govan shipyard; [174316]

(6) on what date the former Secretary of State received the minutes of the meeting between Mr. George Simpson of GEC and the Prime Minister to discuss the merger of BAE and GEC; [174317]

(7) what meetings the former Secretary of State held at *(a)* Dover House and *(b)* elsewhere to discuss (i) the future of the Govan shipyard and (ii) the BAE-GEC merger; and on what dates; [174319]

(8) if he will publish the *(a)* minutes and *(b)* list of attendees of meetings held by the former Secretary of State at Dover House or elsewhere to discuss (i) the future of Govan shipyard and (ii) BAE-GEC merger; [174320]

(9) what meetings *(a)* the former Secretary of State and *(b)* his advisers, representatives and officials had with the taskforce chaired by Sir Gavin Laird set up by the Government to look for potential buyers for the Govan shipyard in 1999; [174321]

(10) what meetings were held by the former Secretary of State with Sir Gavin Laird to discuss the future of the Govan shipyard in 1999; and what the dates were of the meetings; [174322]

(11) what meetings took place between Mr. Ed Miliband and his officials in 1999 to discuss the *(a)* GEC-BAE merger and *(b)* Govan shipyard; and what the dates were of the meetings. [174323]

Mr. Darling: My officials and I have meetings and discussions with a wide range of organisations and individuals. As with previous Administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings, under exemptions 2 and 7 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. Exemption 12 of the Code also applies with regard to privacy of an individual.

Mr. Blunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) what his Department's involvement was in the negotiations over the future of Govan shipyard in 1999; [174308]

(2) what the involvement was of *(a)* the former Secretary of State and *(b)* his representatives and advisers in informal and oral approaches made to GEC over the purchase of Govan shipyard in 1999. [174309]

Mr. Darling: The then Scottish Office established the Kvaerner Task Force to act as a facilitator for discussions with key stakeholders, with the aim of securing the immediate future of the Govan shipyard.

Mr. Blunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) who chaired the press briefing on 16 April 2004 at the Scottish Office at which it was suggested that GEC would be transferring some of its shipbuilding work to Govan from Barrow-in-Furness; [174310]

(2) if he will publish the *(a)* minutes and *(b)* list of attendees of the press briefing on 16 April 2004 at the Scottish Office at which it was suggested that GEC would be transferring some of its shipbuilding work to Govan from Barrow-in-Furness. [174318]

Mr. Darling: No Scottish Office press briefing was given on that date. I am informed that a briefing was given by Sir Gavin Laird in his capacity as Kvaerner Task Force chairman.

Low Sulphur Petrol

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer regarding the provision of low sulphur petrol in the north-east of Scotland and the highlands and islands after 1 September; and if he will make a statement. [174482]

Mrs. McGuire: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Economic Secretary to the Treasury, on 24 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1460W.

CABINET OFFICE

E-Government

Mr. Berry: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how the Government will be improving its e-Government Metadata Standard to ensure that the websites of *(a)* Government departments and *(b)* agencies and non-departmental public bodies are exemplars of accessibility. [177021]

Mr. Alexander: The e-Government Metadata Standard (e-GMS) provides information about the technical aspects of accessibility of a web page. It is reviewed and updated on an annual basis through consultation with a wide range of government departments, other public bodies, academics, the private sector and the UK public itself.

e-GMS is mandatory for new public sector IT systems and the number of sites meeting the standard will therefore improve as sites are replaced or upgraded.

The Cabinet Office encourages compliance through the provision of guidance and good practice. Compliance to the guidelines and standards is the responsibility of the individual departments.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Iraq

Sir John Stanley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on what date he first became aware of allegations of abuse of Iraqi detainees by British service personnel in Iraq; and from what source. [174392]

Mr. Rammell *[holding answer 19 May 2004]:* My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary first became aware of allegations of abuse of Iraqi detainees by British service personnel in Iraq in April 2003. The allegations against Colonel Tim Collins, which were widely publicised in the media, were investigated and it was found there was no case to answer.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the current situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and what discussions he has had with the *(a)* Democratic Republic of the Congo Government and *(b)* Government of Rwanda on the situation in Bukavu. [177977]

Mr. Mullin: The situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is of great concern. Events in the east and violent demonstrations in Kinshasa and other major cities have placed the transition process under serious strain. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has spoken to President Kabila of the DRC and President Kagame of Rwanda. We have been in constant contact with the key players to press for restraint and to urge them to work constructively to achieve a peaceful solution.

I had a meeting with Kabila's envoy on Monday 7 June.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent reports he has received on attacks upon UN personnel in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and if he will make a statement. [177978]

Mr. Mullin: There have been a number of attacks on the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) in recent weeks. An unarmed Military Observer was killed in South Kivu on 31 May and two South African peacekeepers were killed and several others were injured in an unrelated incident in North Kivu on 2 June. On 2 and 3 June MONUC was targeted by violent demonstrations in Kinshasa and other towns across the DRC. The UK supports the efforts of the UN to achieve the military and political stabilisation of the DRC.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received of abuse of women, including rape and other sexual offences, by UN peacekeepers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. [177979]

Mr. Mullin: We are deeply concerned about press reports alleging serious sexual abuse by peacekeepers of the UN Mission in the DRC (MONUC), including against children. MONUC have launched an urgent internal investigation into the allegations. If these are confirmed, we will press MONUC to take all necessary steps to prevent such abuses from re-occurring.

India

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the new Indian Government on the legacy of the Amritsar attacks on the Sikh shrine. [177980]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: None.

Kosovo

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the recent shooting of a Serb teenager in Gracanica, Kosovo; and what discussions he has had with the authorities in Kosovo on this incident. [177981]

Mr. MacShane: In the early hours of 5 June, a Serb teenager was killed in a drive-by shooting in the Serb enclave of Gracanica in the municipality of Pristina. Two suspects were subsequently arrested by Kosovo Police Service officers. The Prime Minister and President of Kosovo have both condemned the attack. The Contact Group also condemned this incident in their meeting in Pristina on 8 June, and had discussions with both UN Interim Administration Mission in

Kosovo and Kosovo Serbs. The British Office in Pristina has been in touch with the police in Kosovo to urge that every effort be made to bring the perpetrators to justice.

Sudan

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions his Department has had with the United Nations on preventing crimes against humanity in Sudan. [176816]

Mr. Mullin: We are deeply concerned about the human rights situation in Darfur. We are in close contact with the UN and other members of the international community on this matter. Most recently my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Development spoke to the UN Secretary-General about Darfur on 9 June. We are calling on all sides to put a stop to the human rights abuses and breaches of international humanitarian law.

We see the deployment of the African Union (AU) ceasefire monitoring team as key to improving the security situation and addressing civilian protection. The UK will contribute one of the six observers requested from the EU, and have already provided £2 million to help the AU team to set up. In addition, the UN is planning to deploy human rights monitors throughout Darfur with UK financial support.

Zimbabwe

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many Zimbabwean residents have left Zimbabwe and sought residency in the United Kingdom during the last 12 months. [175156]

Mr. Browne: I have been asked to reply.

The requested information is not available.

Data are available on the number of entry clearance applications granted in Zimbabwe and Zimbabwean nationals seeking asylum. The latest available data are provided in the tables. In addition 3,530 Zimbabwean nationals were granted settlement in 2002.

Detailed statistics on immigration control are published in the Command Paper "Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom 2002" (cm 6053) obtained from the House Library, the Stationary Office and via the Home Office website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/commandpubs1.html

Information on asylum applications is published in quarterly web pages and in the annual statistical bulletin Asylum Statistics United Kingdom. Copies of these publications and others relating to general immigration to the UK are available from the Library of the House and from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigrationl.html

Initial decisions made on asylum applications[1, 2] received in the United Kingdom excluding dependants, 2003, nationals of Zimbabwe

	Initial decisions
Total decisions	4,175
Grants of asylum	870
Grants of ELR[3]	10
Grants of HP[4]	5
Grants of DL[4]	20
Total refusals	3,275

[1] Provisional figures rounded to nearest 5, with * = 1 or 2
[2] Information is of initial determination decisions, excluding the outcome of appeals or other subsequent decisions.
[3] Granted between 1 January 2003 and 31 March 2003 only.
[4] Granted from 1 April 2003.

Decisions on entry clearance applications, nationals of Zimbabwe, 2002[1]

Entry clearance applications for:	*Granted*[2]	*Refused initially*[3]
Temporary purposes[4]	8,665	4,160
Settlement[5]	1,475	80

[1] Actual data not available, estimates based on financial year data.
[2] Granted initially or on appeal.
[3] Some may have been granted subsequently on appeal.
[4] Nationals of certain countries currently need a visa to enter the UK regardless of the purpose of their journey.
[5] Includes applications for a certificate to the right of abode.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Transitional Government (Iraq)

20. **Mrs. Anne Campbell:** To ask the Minister for Women if she will make a statement on the representation of women in positions of power in the transitional Government of Iraq. [177774]

Ms Hewitt: I am delighted to hear that six women have now been appointed as Ministers in Iraq. I am especially pleased to hear that the Iraqi interim Government has created the post of Minister of State for Women.

Women's Entrepreneurship

22. **Mrs. Curtis-Thomas:** To ask the Minister for Women if she will make a statement on the progress of the strategic framework for women's entrepreneurship launched in May 2003. [177777]

Ms Hewitt: As a result of Strategic Framework, all nine English regions and all 45 Business Link Operators have set targets to increase the number of women starting their own businesses.

Already, in the last year, the Labour Force Survey shows that the number of self-employed women in the UK has risen by 4.4 per cent. bringing the total number of businesses started and run by women to almost one million.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Airwave

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what level of risk the Government considers is involved in the national roll-out of Airwave. [168382]

Caroline Flint: The Airwave service is already available to 35 police forces and we expect the national roll-out to complete by mid-2005 as planned. We do not anticipate any substantial difficulties in the remaining stages of the Airwave roll-out.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 12 May, *Official Report*, column 352W, on Tetra, what reports he has received from the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory assessments of the effects of Tetra exposure on various types of cells; and whether this research is continuing. [176449]

Caroline Flint: Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) researchers have completed their work on calcium exchanges in cells—the main concern of the Stewart report. They found Tetra exposure had no effect. Work is continuing to see if exposure to Tetra can affect electrical activity in brain cells and to assess the effects of Tetra signals on cognitive performance. Quarterly reports are available from the Home Office website at www.homeoffice.gov.uk/docs/tetra.html.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 12 May, *Official Report*, column 352W, on Tetra, whether the research by Imperial College includes research into the health effects of *(a)* Airwave handsets and *(b)* Tetra masts. [176450]

Caroline Flint: The Imperial College national monitoring study of the health of Airwave police users is concerned with possible health effects from handsets. It does not include any work on Tetra masts.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 12 May, *Official Report*, column 352W, on Tetra, what health issues are being researched by the University of Birmingham and the University of Manchester in their research into patterns of work of Airwave users. [176451]

Caroline Flint: The University of Birmingham and the University of Manchester studies do not involve any health issues. The purpose of this research is to gather information on the typical number of calls made by Airwave police users and on the duration of these calls.

Littering

Mr. Salter: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions have been made for littering since the Environmental Protection Act 1990 came into force. [176041]

Paul Goggins: Information is given in the table.

Statistics for 2003 will be published in the autumn.

Number of defendants prosecuted at the magistrates' courts for litter offences under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, England and Wales 1992—2002[1]

	Environmental Protection Act 1990 s87	*Environmental Protection Act 1990 s91 and 92*	*Environmental Protection Act 1990 s94*
	Depositing litter[2]	*Failing to comply with a litter abatement order or notice*	*Failing to comply with a street litter control notice*
1992[3]	828	7	0
1993	1,170	4	0
1994	1,164	7	1
1995	1,101	5	2
1996	626	8	1
1997	505	4	1
1998	494	2	2
1999	501	0	5
2000[4]	466	2	0
2001	457	7	0
2002	332	2	1

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.
[2] Litter wardens appointed by local authorities can issue Fixed Penalty Notices, currently 50, for depositing litter.
[3] Data collection commenced in 1992.
[4] Staffordshire Police Force were only able to supply a sample of data for magistrates courts proceedings covering one full week in each quarter for 2000. Estimates based on this sample are included in the figures.

Crime Statistics (Bootle)

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in *(a)* overall recorded crime, *(b)* recorded violent crime *(c)* burglaries and *(d)* vehicle thefts in Bootle has been since 1997. [175913]

Ms Blears: The information requested is not available centrally.

Bootle comes within the Sefton Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) area. Data at CDRP level has only been published from 1999–2000 onwards. Detailed statistics at CDRP level are available for 2002–03 on the new Home Office website: http://www.crimestatistics.org.uk

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many times powers preventing racial harassment introduced since 1997 have been used in Bootle. [175914]

Fiona Mactaggart: Figures for the number of prosecutions in Bootle for this type of offence are not centrally available. Merseyside Police figures for harassment offences (published by the Home Office under the requirements of S95 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991) show a total of 434 recorded offences of this type in the Merseyside Police area over the period 1999–2000 to 2001–02.

Asset Recovery Operations

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the 10 most successful asset recovery operations. [176641]

Ms Blears: Asset recovery operations and investigations are carried out by a range of agencies individually and collectively, including the police, Her Majesty's Customs and Excise, National Crime Squad, Assets Recovery Agency and the Inland Revenue. The

Crown Prosecution Service and other prosecuting authorities are responsible for obtaining confiscation orders in the courts. Information on individual operations and investigations is not collected centrally.

In 2002–03, the last year for which we have full data, a record amount of criminal assets was recovered, totalling £47 million. The new cash seizure powers in the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 have also been successful. Since they came into force in December 2002 the police and Customs have seized over £63 million, on the grounds that the money in question is derived from or intended for use in crime. Seized cash is subject to forfeiture in the magistrates courts.

The Assets Recovery Agency successfully obtained a civil recovery order in the High Court last month. This is the first such case to be settled in England, Wales and Northern Ireland under the Proceeds of Crime Act, which allows for the civil recovery of the proceeds of unlawful activity.

Child Migration

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many unaccompanied children arrived in the United Kingdom, broken down by *(a)* port of entry to the United Kingdom and *(b)* originating country in each of the last three years. [175952]

Mr. Browne: Information on the number of unaccompanied minors who have arrived in the United Kingdom, broken down by port of entry and originating country is not currently collected.

However the results of Operation Paladin Child on unaccompanied children arriving at Heathrow Airport were announced on 17 May. This operation ran between August 2003—November 2003 and was initiated by the Metropolitan Police Child Protection Command, with the co-operation of the Immigration Service, NSPCC and Hillingdon Social Services.

In total 1,738 unaccompanied minors were granted leave to enter in the three-month study of whom 30 per cent. were risk assessed and referred to Social Services. The operation was a valuable exercise in determining the nature of child migration to the UK and has not uncovered evidence of child trafficking at Heathrow. The full details of the operation, and possible changes to procedures and policy in the light of it, are still being assessed.

Asylum/Immigration

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the organisations with which the Home Office is negotiating to run the proposed accommodation centre for asylum seekers at Bicester. [176113]

Mr. Browne: As part of a procurement exercise carried out under the ED procurement regulations for a contract to design, build and operate the centre near Bicester, the Home Office is in negotiation with Global Solutions Limited UK.

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 754W, on asylum and immigration, when he expects the exercise in respect of asylum seekers remaining in the UK to be completed. [175416]

Mr. Browne: Good progress continues to be made in considering the cases originally identified. The bulk has been processed for eligibility and the majority, where the applicants have responded to our questionnaire, have been decided. We remain reliant on the applicants we contact replying promptly to our inquiries. Those not doing so are being reminded. We expect the exercise largely to be complete by July.

Child Deaths

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many children were killed by their *(a)* mother or father and *(b)* a member of the extended family in each of the last 20 years. [175470]

Ms Blears: The latest available information on homicide is published in Home Office Statistical Bulletin number 01/04, 'Crime in England and Wales 2002/2003: Supplementary Volume 1: Homicide and Gun Crime', a copy of which should be available from the House of Commons library or internet site http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/hosbpubs1.html.

In England and Wales, the numbers of homicide victims under 16 years killed by their parents or by others that they know are given in the table.

	Son/daughter of suspect	*Other family/friend/ acquaintance of suspect*
1983	53	13
1984	62	7
1985	72	14
1986	35	9
1987	54	11
1988	76	12
1989	44	10
1990	49	8
1991	63	15
1992	51	8
1993	49	11
1994	53	11
1995	52	16
1996	58	12
1997	50	17
1997–98	44	15
1998–99	57	17
1999–2000	48	4
2000–01	80	7
2001–02	41	9
2002–03	55	11

Citizenship Ceremonies

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the largest number of new candidates present at a single citizenship ceremony has been. [175376]

Mr. Browne: Citizenship ceremonies are arranged by local authorities in England, Wales and Scotland. Information on the largest number of prospective citizens at those ceremonies so far held is not available. During consultation with local authorities, 10 to 50 applicants was suggested as the normal level of attendance at citizenship ceremonies.

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what knowledge of *(a)* life in the UK and *(b)* the English language is a pre requisite for receiving citizenship. [175377]

Mr. Browne: When brought into force, Part 1 of The Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 will require naturalisation applicants to demonstrate that they have sufficient understanding of English, Welsh or Scottish Gaelic and of UK civic structures.

The language requirement already exists in the British Nationality Act 1981, although the standard is not defined. The Government have accepted the recommendations set out in the report of the "Life in the UK" Advisory Group that under new Regulations, "sufficient understanding" will entail applicants demonstrating progress from one English for Speakers of Other Languages entry level to the next.

Development of the citizenship element of programmes, and the means by which this can be assessed, is continuing in line with the further recommendations of the Advisory Group.

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what timetable he has set for the rolling out of citizenship ceremonies throughout the UK. [175378]

Mr. Browne: The requirement to attend citizenship ceremonies was introduced for applications made on or after 1 January 2004. The first ceremony was held in Brent on 26 February.

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have had an offer of citizenship revoked because of refusal to attend a citizenship ceremony. [175379]

Mr. Browne: To date no applicant has been refused citizenship as a result of refusal to attend a citizenship ceremony.

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many citizenship ceremonies have been held to date in *(a)* town halls, *(b)* registry offices and *(c)* other places; and in how many ceremonies, in each case (i) a gift was given, (ii) the local school participated, (iii) a local choir or band performed, (iv) a local hon. Member or other dignitary attended and (v) a national or local emblem was used. [175380]

Mr. Browne: Citizenship ceremonies are arranged by local authorities in England, Wales and Scotland, who are responsible for venues, composition, content, and attendance of guests and dignitaries. An analysis of ceremonies so far held is not available. Local authorities are encouraged to display national and local emblems at all ceremonies.

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many private citizenship ceremonies have been held for one candidate or one family. [175381]

Mr. Browne: There is no information available on the number of private ceremonies so far arranged.

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many citizenship ceremonies have been held to date; and how many *(a)* adults and *(b)* children have been awarded citizenship at these ceremonies, broken down by area. [175382]

Mr. Browne: The number of citizenship ceremonies held to date is not available, and information could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. The number of adults invited to attend a ceremony up to 30 April is 7,078. The number reported as having attended up to 15 April is 1,906. These figures cannot be broken down by area. Children are not required to attend ceremonies.

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have had an application for citizenship turned down because of insufficient knowledge of *(a)* the English language and *(b)* life in the United Kingdom. [175392]

Mr. Browne: In 2003, the latest year for which published figures are available, there were 20 applicants refused citizenship for insufficient knowledge of English. In 2003, the "Life in the UK" Advisory Group recommended a new definition of sufficient knowledge of English and an additional criterion of knowledge of life in the UK. The Government broadly welcomed these recommendations but they have not yet been introduced.

Domestic/Child Care Staff

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what steps his Department is taking to *(a)* identify and *(b)* prosecute agencies offering staff for domestic and child care duties who are not in possession of the required visa for such work; [175354]

(2) if his Department will assess the merits of sting operations involving advertising requirements for domestic and child care staff as a means of identifying visitors to the UK breaching visa conditions; [175355]

(3) what steps his Department is taking to identify illegal workers in the *(a)* domestic services and *(b)* child care sectors. [175356]

Mr. Browne: The Immigration Service is increasing enforcement activity against illegal working in general, and we have taken steps to strengthen the law preventing employers from using illegal migrant workers, section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996. It is a criminal offence under section 8 to employ someone subject to immigration control who is not entitled to work in the United Kingdom or who is subject to immigration restrictions preventing them

from undertaking the work in question. The law in this area applies to employers or agencies in all sectors of the economy, including those operating in the domestic services and child care sectors. On 1 May, an order under section 147 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 strengthened the security of the document checks employers must carry out on prospective employees in order to establish a defence under section 8. We have also tabled an amendment to the current Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants etc.) Bill to make the current section 8 offence triable either way, effectively removing the statutory limit on financial penalties the courts can impose in the more serious cases.

All Immigration Service illegal working enforcement activity is intelligence led, and if the hon. Member has any specific concerns or information about a particular company I would encourage him to pass these on to the Immigration Service for investigation. A number of enforcement operations in 2003 targeted the contract cleaning sector, but I am not aware of any recent cases involving the child care sector. It would not be appropriate for the Immigration Service to use advertisements to induce agencies to supply illegal workers; to do so would undermine any subsequent criminal proceedings.

Drugs

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many drug related offences there were in the Easington constituency in the last three years; and what the success rate for prosecution was. [170125]

Caroline Flint: Recorded crime figures, which are available at police force level and are used to measure trends in crime, include statistics on drugs offences, such as possession, and on property crimes, such as burglary. However they do not record whether the latter are related to an offender's drug habits. There are therefore no figures currently available for the proportion of crime in the Easington constituency which was connected to drug addiction, and what the success rate for prosecution was.

The Home Office sponsored New English and Welsh Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (NEW-ADAM) survey, which involved interviewing and drug testing those arrested by the police, provides an insight into the proportion of crimes that are drug related. However, this survey does not provide sub-national data and is also not nationally representative.

Data collected from 16 sites across England and Wales during 1999 to 2001, show that heroin and/or cocaine/crack users reported committing an average of 442 acquisitive crimes in the last 12 months. This figure is much higher than for non-drug users, who reported committing an average of 79 acquisitive crimes in the same period.

A comparison of the survey's findings from eight sites across the country visited in 1999 and 2002, indicate that there was no change in the proportion of arrestees testing positive for one or more of six illicit drugs. Nearly two-thirds (65 per cent.) of arrestees in each year tested positive for any drug.

Durham Jail

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many deaths have taken place in Durham jail in each year since 1 January 1997; and how many of these were due to *(a)* suicide and *(b)* natural causes. [176667]

Paul Goggins: The information requested with respect to HMP Durham is included in the table:

	Number of self-inflicted deaths[1]	*Number of deaths by natural/other causes*
1997	2	1
1998	2	0
1999	3	1
2000	1	3
2001	0	0
2002	6	0
2003	5	1
2004[2]	2	1

[1] The Prison Service employs the term "self-inflicted death" rather than suicide. This includes all those deaths where it appears the person has acted intentionally to take his/her own life.

[2] To 27 May.

Central to the suicide prevention strategy I announced on 31 March is the need to reduce levels of distress in prisons and to promote the well being of all staff and prisoners. The strategy has strong support from partner agencies and external organisations, and is being developed in close partnership with the Department of Health.

Durham itself has a comprehensive local suicide and self-harm prevention policy, and an active Safer Prisons Team, which tackles the separate but related issues of suicide, self-harm, bullying and violence reduction. Durham has very strong links with its local Samaritans, who attend the prison at least once per week. They are involved in the selection, training and ongoing support of prisoner peer supporters ("Listeners"), who are a valued and well utilised resource at Durham.

Recognising the increased risk of suicide and self-harm in the early days of custody, Durham has a dedicated First Night Centre, which has strong input from healthcare, probation and detoxification staff. Durham also pioneered the "Meet and Greet" scheme, whereby prisoners, selected and trained by officers, offer information and support to new prisoners during Reception and their first night in custody. This scheme has now been extended across the Prison Service, and is known in other prisons as the "Insiders" scheme.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the refurbishment programme at Durham jail. [176668]

Paul Goggins: At Durham prison the Prison Service is delivering an £8.5 million refurbishment programme which comprises a general upgrade of the fabric, services, security and associated wing facilities for some 170 cells on D and E Wings. The Refurbishment commenced in March 2003 on D wing and is due to finish with E wing in May 2005.

EU Accession Nationals

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will estimate how many *(a)* workers and *(b)* others from the new EU states have arrived in the UK since 1 May. [175441]

Mr. Browne: Since 1 May members of the EU accession countries are subject to the same immigration controls as citizens of other EU member states. We are therefore not able to say how many passengers arrived from EU accession countries or require every passenger to declare their purpose for coming to the UK. Data from the International Passenger Survey (IPS), showing the total number of visits by nationals of all the EU accession countries in May, will be available early in July. Data from the worker registration scheme will be available in due course.

Fruit Farming

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many foreign fruit pickers and agricultural workers he estimates came to work in the UK in each of the last three years. [175398]

Mr. Browne: Non-EU nationals working as seasonal fruit pickers in the UK come under the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS).

The number of work cards issued to SAWS participants in the last three years were:

	Number
2003	23,329
2002	19,372
2001	15,258

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures he has in place to monitor the work of agencies that provide foreign fruit pickers to farming businesses in the UK. [175414]

Mr. Browne: Non-EU nationals working as seasonal fruit pickers in the UK come under the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS). The scheme is administered by nine organisations, known as Operators, under contract to the Home Office.

The contracts require Operators to document their relationship with any third party that they choose to work through, including agencies abroad. They must be satisfied of the professional conduct of such organisations.

The Home Office undertakes regular monitoring of all appointed Operators to ensure that there is full compliance with their contractual obligations.

Identity Cards

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with the Irish Government about his proposal to introduce identity cards. [175100]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 21 May 2004]:* There have been contacts at official and at ministerial level since the publication of the "Next Steps" document in November 2003. These included meetings between my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary and the Irish Minister of Justice. The Irish Government were informed of the publication of the draft Bill and consultation paper in April 2004.

Consultations are on-going between the two Administrations.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what further assessment he has made of the implications of his plans to introduce identity cards for the common travel area between the United Kingdom and the Irish Republic since January. [175192]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 21 May 2004]:* The principle of the Common Travel Area, which includes the UK, Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man, will not be affected by the Government's proposals for an Identity Cards scheme.

Consultations will continue with the Irish Government on the implications of the identity cards scheme.

Judicial Review Cases

Mr. Flight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much has been spent on the defence of judicial review cases which the Government *(a)* won and *(b)* lost in each year since 1997. [173301]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 19 May 2004]:* The records of Home Office expenditure on judicial review cases do not indicate how much is attributable to cases which are won or lost. The amounts paid by the Home Office to the Treasury Solicitor for handling judicial review cases from May 1997 were as follows. The figures comprise Treasury Solicitor's charges and disbursements, including counsel's fees.

	Amount (£)
1997	1,723,587
1998	4,392,654
1999	3,395,411
2000	4,979,425
2001	5,294,852
2002	5,920,377
2003	6,231,668
2004	2,695,265
Total	34,633,239

JR Cases expenditure since May 1997

			Data			
Type	*Client*	*Calendar year*	*Sum of hours*	*Sum of fees*	*Sum of disbursements*	*Sum of total*
23	HMPS	1997	42.6	2,892.60	5,733.38	8,625.98
		1998	62.7	4,129.80	5,079.38	9,209.18
		1999	9.2	574.00	89,404.51	89,978.51
		2000	56.7	2,971.20	4,001.83	6,973.03
		2001	60.8	3,321.10	1,620.49	4,941.59
		2002	97.8	6,121.40	6,433.48	12,554.88
		2003	3.4	266.40	394.50	660.90
		2004	0.0	0.00	0.00	0.00
	HMPS Total		333.2	20,276.50	112,667 .57	132,944.07
	HOME	1997	8,464.5	596,457.90	663,917.14	1,260,375.04
		1998	21,093.6	1,492,905.30	1,745,589.98	3,238.495.28
		1999	16,978.2	1,221,451.50	1,189,467.43	2,410,918.93
		2000	19,805.5	1,483,029.50	2,478,642.73	3,961,672.23
		2001	24,326.5	1,868,066.10	1,550,874.62	3,418,940.72
		2002	33,123.9	2,388,566.50	1,209,105.49	3,597,671.99
		2003	19,692.1	1,384,324.10	696,139.51	2,080,463.61
		2004	202.4	13,157.40	13,293.14	26,450.54
	HOME Total		143,686.7	10,447,958.30	9,547,030.04	19,994,988.34
23 Total			144,019.9	10,468,234.80	9,659,697.61	20,127,932.41
23C	HOME	1997	120.3	7,440.00	6,624.46	14,064.46
		1998	426.4	30,080.80	12,960.05	43,040.85
		1999	145.9	11,325.50	103,021.84	114,347.34
		2000	215.2	17,295.30	99,117.32	116,412.62
		2001	369.0	29,765.70	146,373.39	176,139.09
		2002	1,953.1	154,611.00	205,236.39	359,847.39
		2003	2,714.5	213,820.10	356,627.10	570,447.20
		2004	817.9	59,625.30	63,898.31	123,523.67
	HOME Total		6,762.3	523,963.70	993,858.92,	1,517,822.62
23C Total			6,762.3	523,963.70	993,858.92	1,517,822.62
23D	HOME	2000	2.4	204.20	0.00	204.20
		2001	87.7	7,637.30	2,485.15	10,122.45
		2002	293.6	20,025.10	5,706.78	25,731.88
		2003	3,289.5	242,262.80	107,685.57	349,948.37
		2004	1,946.6	133,087.80	59,442.46	192,530.26
	HOME Total		5,19.8	403,217.20	175,319.96,	578,537.16
23D Total			5,619.8	403,217.20	175,319.96	578,537.16
23E	HOME	2002	41.0	2,838.20	552.25	3,390.45
		2003	1,350.5	110,369.80	71,938.00	182,307.80
		2004	1,934.8	145,874.30	42,541.51	188,415.87
	Home Total		3,326.3	259,082.30	115,031.82	374,114.12
23E Total			3,326.3	259,082.30	115,031.81	374.114.12
23T	HOME	2001	11.8	1,062.00	0.00	1,062.00
		2002	68.1	6,027	9,467.78	15,494.98
		2003	6,699.9	424,339.60	124,434.33	548,773.93
		2004	10,566.5	641,503.90	141,227.98	782,731.88
	HOME Total		17,346.3	1,072,932.70	275,130.59	1,348,062.79
23T Total			17,346.3	1,072,932.70	275,130.09	1,348,062.79
26	HMPS	1997	1,269.5	101,139.40	287,108.10	388,247.50
		1998	2,383.0	164,713.10	653,763.88	818,476.98
		1999	2,534.6	182,007.50	307,752.54	489,760.04,
		2000	3,089.0	227,180.40	409,566.28	636,746.68
		2001	3,801.1	283,631.30	448,883.39	732,514.69
		2002	3,990.8	299,021.10	172,985.66	472,006.76
		2003	1,394.6	120,704.70	76,400.51	197,105.21
		2004	41.9	3,820.00	20,943.58	24,763.58
	HMPS Total		18,504.5	1,382,217.50	2,377,403.94	3,759,621. 44
	HOME	1997	214.0	17.507.90	32,211.73	49,719.63
		1998	598.2	48.015.10	216,937.23	264,952.33
		1999	402.0	31,539.50	133,500.82	165,040.32
		2000	509.6	39.385.60	70,585.94	109,971.54

JR Cases expenditure since May 1997

Type	Client	Calendar year	Data: Sum of hours	Sum of fees	Sum of disbursements	Sum of total
		2001	952.4	78,893.80	231,767.60	310,661.40
		2002	1,246.9	104,609.90	113,161.05	217,770.95
		2003	331.1	30,852.60	30,467.71	61,320.31
		2004	0.5	35.00	2,852.55	2,887.55
	HOME Total		4,254.7	350,839.40	831,484.63	1,182,324.03
26 Total			22,759.2	1,733,056.90	3,208,888.57	4,941,945.47
26R	HMPS	1998	0.0	0.00	0.00	0.00
		1999	0.0	0.00	0.00	0.00
		2000	0.0	0.00	0.00	0.00
		2001	0.0	0.00	0.00	0.00
		2002	10.1	929.50	587.50	1,517.00
		2003	7.1	708.00	0.00	708.00
		2004	0.9	97.20	0.00	97.20
	HMPS Total		18.1	1,734.70	587.50	2,322.20
	HOME	1998	24.8	1,100.00	17.00	1,117.00
		1999	350.0	27,459.00	56,719.55	84,178.55
		2000	75.6	5,794.10	8,299.55	14,093.65
		2001	507.1	41,312.30	32,488.27	73,800.57
		2002	903.7	76,815.00	119,614.34	196,429.34
		2003	1,864.6	171,335.50	166,099.31	337,434.81
		2004	844.9	77,434.60	116,265.40	193,700.00
	HOME Total		4,570.7	401,250.50	499,503.42	900,753.92
26R Total			4,588.8	402,985.20	500,090.92	903,076.12
23N	HOME	1997	27.5	2,314.30	242.00	2,556.30
		1998	142.0	11,403.90	5,958.64	17,362.54
		1999	797.8	33,549.50	7,637.50	41,187.00
		2000	1,663.6	80,687.50	29,440.17	110,127.67
		2001	2,730.7	170,465.30	157,997.40	328,462.70
		2002	6,273.0	417,246.20	270,191.76	687,437.96
		2003	17,054.8	1,183,361.00	556,222.16	1,739,583.16
		2004	11,303.3	765,167.50	318,981.57	1,084,149.07
	HOME Total		39,992.7	2,664,195.20	1,346,671.20	4,010,866.40
23N Total			39,992.7	2,664,195.20	1,346,671.20	4,010,866.40
23M	HMPS	2000	0.0	0.00	0.00	0.00
		2001	0.0	0.00	0.00	0.00
		2002	23.6	2,248.50	3,426.99	5,675.49
		2003	0.9	84.00	0.00	84.00
		2004	113.0	11,896.40	2,130.86	14,027.26
	HMPS Total		137.5	14,228.90	5,557.85	19,786.75
	Home	2000	220.7	17,553.70	5,668.27	23,221.97
		2001	953.7	69,729.00	168,476.75	238,205.75
		2002	844.6	70,430.20	254,418.71	324,848.91
		2003	983.9	92,851.50	69,979.82	162,831.32
		2004	377.2	26,929.90	35,057.52	61,987.42
	HOME Total		3,380.1	277,494.30	533,601.07	811,095.37
23M Total			3,517.6	291,723.20	539,158.92	830,882.12
Grand Total			247,932.9	17,819,391.20	16,813,848.01	34,633,239.21

National Minorities Convention

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the representations he has received from representatives of national minorities for consideration in the Government's compliance report to the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. [175400]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* We have received a number of submissions on our forthcoming compliance report under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. We are currently considering those submissions, but have not yet made a final assessment.

NCIS

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers have left the National Criminal Intelligence Service before the end of their secondment *(a)* at their own request and *(b)* on

being instructed to do so in each of the last five years for which records are available. [166599]

Caroline Flint: The National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) does not maintain annual statistics for seconded police officers returning prior to the end of their secondment. However, based on an analysis on 100 police officers who left NCIS between July 2000 and March 2003, two thirds left earlier than expected at their own request (by an average of seven months), having secured their next posting in their parent force. NCIS can require an officer to return to force prior to the end of his or her secondment, for example where NCIS has "lost confidence" in the officer. This is a rare occurrence, involving typically only one or two cases a year.

Operation Cyclamen

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department at how many UK *(a)* airports and *(b)* border points Operation Cyclamen is being implemented. [174612]

Mr. Blunkett: Programme Cyclamen equipment provides the capability to routinely screen all forms of traffic at UK points of entry for the illicit movement of radioactive materials. Screening operations commenced in April. For security reasons it would not in the public interest to be more specific.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has discussed the technology used in Operation Cyclamen with his counterparts in *(a)* other EU and *(b)* other countries. [174613]

Mr. Blunkett: The Government have had useful discussions and exchanges with counterparts in the US, EU and elsewhere, regarding the radiation screening equipment used in the Programme Cyclamen. A wide range of detection and security equipment is already in place around the world.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the first use of the technology of Operation Cyclamen took place in the UK. [174614]

Mr. Blunkett: Trials of the Programme Cyclamen equipment were first undertaken at selected UK points of entry in 2002. Permanent screening commenced in April this year.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what training is provided to those using Cyclamen chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear technology. [174615]

Mr. Blunkett: The HMCE Customs Officers operating the Programme Cyclamen equipment receive training in radiation protection awareness in addition to training on the operating procedures for the equipment.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether those using Cyclamen technology are *(a)* customs officials and *(b)* private security officers. [174616]

Mr. Blunkett: The operation of Cyclamen Programme detection equipment at UK points of entry, is undertaken by Her Majesty's Customs and Excise officers.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what implications the Madrid bombings of 11 March have for Operation Cyclamen. [174618]

Mr. Blunkett: The tragic events of March 11 further hardened our resolve to combat the international terrorist threat, in all its forms. The Government already have in place proven contingency plans for responding to a wide range of terrorist actions, including those at Madrid.

Programme Cyclamen is an ongoing programme of work, which commenced in April 2003 covering the routine screening of all forms of traffic, at UK ports of entry, for the illicit movement of radioactive materials. It is one element of the Government's strategy to reduce the threat of terrorist attack.

Overseas Bribery

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many of the allegations of overseas bribery on the national register held by the National Criminal Intelligence Service relate to offences prior to 14 February 2002. [175976]

Caroline Flint: The number of cases recorded on the register that pre-date the legislation is five.

This could rise to six as additional documentation is received on an earlier referral that was previously recorded for information only.

Mr. Yalcin

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the letter to the hon. Member for Totnes dated 11 May 2004 concerning Mr. Fahettin Yalcin, formerly of Brixham, Devon, when Mr.Yalcin will be deported from the UK; and if he will make a statement. [175572]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 26 May 2004]:* I have already written to the hon. Member on 11 May explaining that information relating to the immigration status of an individual is treated as confidential. This reflects the Home Office's legal obligations under common law, human rights and data protection legislation, and the treatment of private and personal information under the Code of Practice on Access to Information. I have also given him limited information about the case "in confidence" and can assure him that the case is with the Immigration Service. However, it would be inappropriate to make a statement giving details that could prejudice an operational matter of this kind.

Police (Data Sharing)

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what data sharing system each police force is operating or proposing to operate; whether the systems are compatible; what he is doing to ensure compatibility; what his estimate is of the cost of ensuring compatibility; whether he will be requiring compatibility; what resources will be invested, and from what sources, for compatibility; and if he will make a statement. [172277]

Caroline Flint: Police Services operate a number of systems for different operational purposes and the extent of data sharing between these has depended on local requirements. The "Information Strategy for the Police Service" provides guidance to forces on technical integration of systems and a corporate data model to support data sharing both within and between forces. The Police Information Technology Organisation (PITO) and its Central Customer are actively engaged with forces, the Association of Chief Police Officers and others in articulating the information sharing needs of the Police Service. A specific initiative to facilitate data sharing in support of the National Intelligence Model is incorporated within the Home Office Police Science and Technology Strategy. The first step is a feasibility and costing study. This will link with the Cross Regional Information Sharing Project (CRISP) that is being taken forward by a consortium of forces, supported by PITO, to share information across force boundaries.

Police Numbers

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers there were in the Lancashire Constabulary in *(a)* 1992, *(b)* 1997, *(c)* 2002 and *(d)* the latest year for which figures are available. [176283]

Ms Blears: The information requested is given in the table.

Police officer strength[1] Lancashire Constabulary

	Number
31 March 1992	3,198
31 March 1997	3,247
31 March 2002	3,304
31 March 2003[2]	3,339

[1] full time equivalents
[2] comparable with previously published data i.e. excludes staff on career breaks or maternity/paternity leave.

The latest available figures for the end of the year were issued with Home Office Press Release 095/2004 on 2 March 2004. On 31 December 2003 Lancashire Constabulary police officer strength was 3,549.

Probation Service

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of probation officers required over the next five years. [176315]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* On current projections the number of probation staff will increase to 23,200 by 2008.

Public Order

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* arrests and *(b)* convictions there have been for breaching a designated public place order in each year since 2001. [175256]

Ms Blears: Information on arrests collected centrally is based on persons arrested for "notifiable" offences only and therefore does not cover this offence, as it is not notifiable.

The offence of alcohol consumption in a designated public place (Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001) came into force on 1 September 2001 and was recorded in the Home Office Court Proceedings database from 1 January 2002. The information collected shows that no persons were convicted of this offence in 2002.

Statistics for 2003 will be published in the autumn.

Fixed penalty notices for disorder have now been introduced in England and Wales covering 11 penalty offences. They have been introduced to provide the police with a quick and effective tool for dealing with minor disorder offences which saves both police and court time as well as providing the offender with an immediate punishment. The offence of drinking in a designated public place is included in the scheme. Home Office Research Findings No. 232 published in March this year gave details of the early results from the pilots of the scheme. This shows that for the period August 2002 to 28 March 2003 a total of four penalty notices were issued for the offence of drinking in a designated public place.

Recordable Offences

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what changes have been made to the list of recordable offences since 1997. [177466]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 9 June 2004]:* All offences under provisions which carry the possibility of a custodial sentence are recordable, plus 52 other, non-imprisonable, offences specified in the Schedule to the National Police Records (Recordable Offences) Regulations 2000, as amended by the National Police Records (Recordable Offences) (Amendment) Regulations 2003. Regulations made prior to 1997 had listed five non-imprisonable offences as recordable

section 1, Street Offences Act 1959 (offence of loitering or soliciting for purposes of prostitution);

section 43, Telecommunications Act 1984 (offence of improper use of public telecommunications system);

section 29, Road Traffic Act 1972 (penalisation of tampering with vehicles);

section 1, Malicious Communications Act 1988 (offence of sending letters etc. with intent to cause distress or anxiety); and

section 139(1), Criminal Justice Act 1988 (offence of having article with blade or point in public place).

The National Police Records (Recordable Offences) (Amendment) Regulations 1997 added a further 42 offences to the list. The 2000 Regulations added a further 5 offences, and at the same time consolidated the provisions, including the list. Most recently, the 2003 Amendment Regulations added offences of taxi touting, begging and persistent begging to the list, and made some tidying-up amendments including removing from the list three offences which are now imprisonable and therefore no longer needed to be specified in the list as recordable.

Seasonal Fruit Pickers

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average age is of seasonal fruit pickers who came to work in the UK in the last three years. [175439]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* Non-EU nationals working as seasonal fruit pickers in the UK come under the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS). Data about the average age of SAWS participants prior to 2004 is not available.

The average age of SAWS participants who have been issued work cards to work on the scheme in 2004 is 22.

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average length of time a contracted seasonal fruit picker spent working in the UK in the last three years. [175445]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* Non-EU nationals working as seasonal fruit pickers in the UK come under the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS). Data about the average length of contract for SAWS participants prior to 2004 is not available.

We anticipate that SAWS participants who have been issued work cards for 2004 will work on the scheme for an average of 4.7 months. Participants may only work for a maximum of six months on SAWS.

Sentencing

Mr. John Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the dialogue between the Judicial Studies Board and the Sentencing Advisory Council. [176615]

Paul Goggins: I am satisfied with the arrangements for dialogue between the Judicial Studies Board and the Sentencing Guidelines Council. The Chair of the Judicial Studies Board's Criminal Committee is ex officio a member of the Sentencing Guidelines Council and there is regular contact between officials form both organisations.

Telecommunications Masts

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 12 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 352W, on Tetra, what further work has been carried out by the National Radiological Protection Board on modelling specific absorption rates arising from Tetra masts. [176485]

Caroline Flint: The National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) has calculated specific absorption rates from Tetra handsets. Even in worst case situations, these were found to be well below international health and safety guidelines. In areas accessible to the public, signals from Tetra masts are very much weaker than those from handsets. The NRPB has not carried out any further work on specific absorption rates from Tetra masts.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 12 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 352W, on Tetra, what research has been carried out by the Radiocommunications Agency (now Ofcom) in checking the biological effects of low level electro-magnetic radiation from Tetra base station. [176486]

Caroline Flint: Ofcom does not carry out any research on the potential biological effects of low level electro-magnetic radiation. Ofcom does however check that signal levels from base stations comply with health and safety guidelines. Ofcom checks at 12 Tetra base stations have confirmed that signal levels are hundreds of times less than international health and safety guidelines in areas accessible to the public.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 12 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 352W, on Tetra, what research is being carried out by King's College, London under the Mobile Telecommunications and Health Research programme into the health effect of Tetra base stations and masts. [176487]

Caroline Flint: King's College London is already assessing the effects of GSM mobile phone handsets on cognitive performance and stress levels. It will extend the study to Tetra handsets in 2005. No work is planned on Tetra base stations or masts.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 12 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 352W, on Tetra, when he expects each of the research projects he refers to in his answer to report. [176488]

Caroline Flint: We expect two final reports from Dstl during 2004: the first on biological effects of Tetra in September and the second on cognitive performance in December. The Universities of Birmingham and Manchester are due to report in October 2004. MCL is due to report in December 2005.

Because Imperial College is carrying out a long-term study, its interim report is not due until 2010.

Interim reports from these studies are available from the Home Office website: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/docs/tetra.html, as are final reports from completed studies.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 12 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 352W, on Tetra, if he will list the people carrying out the research by Microwave Consultants Ltd. into specific absorption rates from Tetra equipment; whether this research includes Tetra masts; and what the source of funding is for this research. [176489]

Caroline Flint: The main Microwave Consultants Ltd. expert currently working on specific absorption rates from Tetra equipment is Dr. Philip Chadwick. The research does not include Tetra masts. It is funded by the Home Office.

Worker Registration Scheme

Mr. Mallins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many persons from the new EU states have made an application under the Worker Registration Scheme since 1 May. [175440]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 24 May 2004]*: We will be making information about the effect of EU enlargement available on a regular basis, in an open and transparent way, when it is appropriate and meaningful to do so.

HEALTH

Abortions

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many abortions were performed on women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 in England and Wales in each year since 2000; and if he will make a statement; [174520]

(2) how many abortions among women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 there were in each year since 2000, broken down by strategic health authority; and if he will make a statement. [174524]

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many abortions in those aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 there were in each year since 2000; [174460]

(2) how many abortions were carried out on women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 in the Essex Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000. [174574]

Sir Teddy Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many abortions were performed on women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years in each year since 2000; [174505]

(2) how many abortions among women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in the Essex Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000. [174512]

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many abortions among women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in the Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000. [174952]

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many abortions among women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in the Thames Valley Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000. [175387]

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many abortions among women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in the Dorset and Somerset Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000. [175624]

Mrs. Roe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many abortions among women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000. [174886]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer the hon. Members to the response I gave to my hon. Friends the Members for Workington (Tony Cunningham) and for Heywood and Middleton (Jim Dobbin) today.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the circumstances under which a girl under 16 years of age may obtain an abortion without parental consent. [175791]

Miss Melanie Johnson: An abortion can only ever be carried out where two doctors are satisfied that one of the grounds for a lawful termination, as set out in the Abortion Act 1967, is met.

Health professionals can provide medical advice, treatment and examination, including abortion, for young people aged under 16. However they must be satisfied before doing so, that the young person is competent to consent to the treatment, by being of sufficient understanding and intelligence to enable him or her to understand fully the proposed treatment. Health professionals work within an established legal and guidance framework which involves assessing the young person's competence to understand the choices they are making and in particular encouraging them to talk to their parents. All health professionals are bound by their professional code and legal obligations as to confidentiality, which apply to patients under 16 as well as older patients.

The duty of confidentiality is not, however, absolute. In the rare cases when a health professional believes that there is a risk to the health, safety or welfare of a young person or others which is so serious as to outweigh the young person's right to privacy, they should follow locally agreed child protection protocols, as outlined in "Working together to safeguard Children".

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many abortions among women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and (i) 19 there were in West Cumbria Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 2000; [175419]

(2) how many abortions on women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in each year since 2000. [175521]

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many abortions among women of 19 years and under there were in Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000, broken down by age; [175785]

(2) how many abortions in women of 19 years and under there were in each year since 2000, broken down by age. [175788]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The available information is shown in the tables.

Number of abortions to women under age 20 by strategic health authority of residence, 2000

Strategic health authority	Age < 14	14	15	16	17	18	19
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	8	23	76	174	236	298	269
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	1	22	70	140	219	268	280
Essex	6	25	68	159	199	268	265
North West London	7	31	88	203	357	403	568
North Central London	4	26	59	159	230	324	409
North East London	8	43	124	213	368	450	494
South East London	14	38	95	234	349	460	532
South West London	9	21	74	151	215	291	338
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	2	29	101	162	229	261	275
County Durham and Tees Valley	4	21	71	108	160	179	195
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	7	28	90	164	238	272	262
West Yorkshire	5	38	97	211	307	328	360
Cumbria and Lancashire	3	29	116	205	293	355	320
Greater Manchester	5	38	145	328	419	551	569
Cheshire and Merseyside	5	35	114	284	407	495	503
Thames Valley	7	34	96	225	259	307	396
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	4	21	79	147	236	245	310
Kent and Medway	3	26	77	139	233	254	285
Surrey and Sussex	2	37	100	215	331	368	419
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	8	34	100	180	256	294	372
South West Peninsula	4	24	59	133	198	214	224
Somerset and Dorset	3	14	57	85	161	163	144
South Yorkshire	4	26	91	159	184	222	251
Trent	6	44	108	241	331	357	447
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	6	21	74	150	201	248	290
Shropshire and Staffordshire	1	29	84	152	209	235	236
Birmingham and the Black Country	14	49	154	267	432	530	570
Coventry, Warwickshire, Hereford and Worcestershire	4	30	91	173	233	287	335
SHA not known	0	0	1	1	1	0	0
Wales	7	50	141	277	404	528	512
England and Wales Total	161	886	2,700	5,439	7,895	9,455	10,430

2001

Strategic Heath Authority	Age < 14	14	15	16	17	18	19
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	6	27	71	168	246	286	303
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	6	25	80	137	219	255	292
Essex	6	18	66	154	218	270	290
North West London	7	24	90	196	331	466	588
North Central London	3	29	63	162	265	325	445
North East London	5	38	112	267	363	487	554
South East London	13	38	121	287	406	500	584
South West London	5	21	71	145	247	246	318
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	3	32	89	157	214	259	237
County Durham and Tees Valley	3	26	57	111	164	188	170
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	1	32	68	154	231	255	244
West Yorkshire	8	31	89	210	268	351	362
Cumbria and Lancashire	5	38	113	196	283	312	318
Greater Manchester	6	57	142	299	458	517	511
Cheshire and Merseyside	6	34	108	295	395	448	471
Thames Valley	3	24	79	196	286	348	420
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	1	32	88	140	239	277	336
Kent and Medway	6	30	80	169	228	279	281
Surrey and Sussex	5	34	97	219	302	373	397
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	6	39	82	185	290	308	398
South West Peninsula	4	24	76	114	204	239	229
Somerset and Dorset	4	13	37	132	153	159	167
South Yorkshire	3	34	77	158	183	221	244
Trent	7	38	131	240	298	378	395
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	2	26	51	143	206	255	278
Shropshire and Staffordshire	4	22	57	180	209	217	210
Birmingham and the Black Country	12	54	145	315	439	504	517
Coventry, Warwickshire, Hereford and Worcestershire	3	26	89	179	225	277	295
Wales	5	51	163	344	394	465	497
England and Wales total	148	917	2,592	5,652	7,964	9,465	10,351

2002[1]

Strategic health authority	Age <14	14	15	16	17	18	19
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	6	23	73	168	217	266	269
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	4	22	57	144	208	225	264
Essex	3	14	64	136	239	256	248
North West London	9	28	79	211	338	403	490
North Central London	11	25	69	170	283	325	388
North East London	6	37	104	255	394	475	540
South East London	11	31	123	298	389	477	555
South West London	4	25	71	160	214	279	312
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	6	23	78	138	205	236	242
County Durham and Tees Valley	5	18	73	111	177	151	185
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	2	27	82	137	221	246	252
West Yorkshire	5	41	104	188	262	336	362
Cumbria and Lancashire	7	37	90	192	275	271	305
Greater Manchester	2	35	129	280	403	484	482
Cheshire and Merseyside	4	41	111	252	396	425	449
Thames Valley	5	17	105	195	278	340	395
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	9	27	75	139	244	263	328
Kent and Medway	6	20	71	152	207	254	269
Surrey and Sussex	3	18	87	190	295	325	398
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	3	22	81	187	263	330	337
South West Peninsula	2	24	62	111	225	207	238
Somerset and Dorset	5	14	48	85	161	180	158
South Yorkshire	5	35	94	182	191	215	229
Trent	6	42	121	218	328	355	409
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	4	31	56	136	219	244	283
Shropshire and Staffordshire	7	20	80	143	186	228	242
Birmingham and the Black Country	8	33	135	267	395	478	558
Coventry, Warwickshire, Hereford and Worcestershire	5	28	90	184	230	281	281
SHA not known	1	2	13	19	50	53	75
Wales	4	39	132	260	392	449	451
England and Wales total	158	799	2,557	5,308	7,885	9,057	9,994

[1] Provisional data.

Source:
Produced by Statistics Division, Department of Health.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many abortions there were in women aged 11 to 19 years in each year since 2000 in the Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Avon Strategic Health Authority, broken down by age. [176122]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave my hon. Friends the Members for Workington (Tony Cunningham) and for Heywood and Middleton (Jim Dobbin) today.

Acupuncture

Mr. Bill O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the future of medical acupuncturists who practise the traditional acupuncture service. [177054]

Mr. Hutton: On 2 March, the Department published proposals for the statutory regulation of herbal medicine and acupuncture practitioners. The consultation period closes on 7 June. We are aware of the interests of both medical and traditional acupuncturists and will consider their representations very carefully.

Adult Education

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the therapeutic benefits of adult education. [177276]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The "Acheson Inquiry into Inequalities in Health" found that education has an important role in influencing inequalities in socio-economic position. Educational qualifications are a determinant of an individual's labour market position, which in turn influences income, housing and other material resources. These are related to health inequalities.

A report by the social exclusion unit on mental health and social exclusion is due for publication shortly. The report covers a wide range of issues, including the positive effect that participation in learning can have on mental health.

Air Pollution

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many adult deaths as a result of air pollution there were in the last year for which figures are available. [174851]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Air pollution is associated with an increased risk of death from respiratory and cardiovascular disease but only estimates of numbers of deaths can be made, based on the findings of epidemiological studies. The committee on the medical effects of air pollutants published a report: quantification of the effects of air pollution on health in the United Kingdom (QUARK) in 1998. The report estimated that 8,100 deaths were brought forward as a result of exposure to particles: the equivalent figures for

sulphur dioxide and ozone being 3,500 and 700 or 12,500, depending on the assumption of threshold for the effects of ozone respectively. Particle concentrations have fallen since 1998 though urban concentrations of ozone are rising albeit slowly. A revision of the QUARK report will be published in 2006.

Care Records Service

Mr. Norman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether additional resources will be made available to general practitioners using the EMIS system to migrate to the new Care Records Service. [176748]

Mr. Hutton: The national programme for information technology (NPfIT) has awarded a number of contracts to local service providers (LSPs) to act as prime contractors to deliver the elements of the NPfIT in a geographical area. It is the primary responsibility of the LSPs to work with national health service healthcare providers, including general practitioners, to deliver the solutions that the NHS needs. This will include working with EMIS and other primary care system providers to ensure that the systems currently in use across the NHS conform to the national standards required and can be upgraded to integrate with new national applications as they come on line. If this is not the case, GPs will be offered a choice of a new compliant system. The costs of this have been included in funding allocations for the NPfIT and to the NHS.

Children's Hospital (Manchester)

Mr. Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his latest estimate is of the date on which work will start on the site for the construction of the new children's hospital in Manchester. [178081]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The estimated date on which work will start on the site for the construction of the new children's hospital in Manchester is late July 2004.

Clinical Advisers (IT Forum)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to involve *(a)* clinicians and *(b)* end users in the development of the NHS IT system; and if he will make a statement. [173092]

Mr. Hutton: I have appointed Professor Aidan Halligan, Deputy Chief Medical Officer, as joint senior responsible owner and director general for the national programme for information technology (NPfIT). Professor Halligan now leads on work to engage doctors and other clinicians to ensure that the national health service IT system meets the needs of users and supports the Government's priority of improving patient treatment.

On 30 April 2004, we announced plans to further improve engagement with NHS stakeholders to support the implementation of the NPfIT. We have set up a new frontline support academy for clinicians. We are currently reviewing the formal arrangements for engaging with the NHS, patients and other stakeholders and we expect to make an announcement on this later in the summer.

Extensive consultation has already taken place with clinical representative groups, including the professional Royal Colleges, the General Medical Council and the British Medical Council, all of whom have provided valuable input. As well as the national professional bodies and groups, the NPfIT team has also engaged closely with expert primary care practitioners, including practising general practitioners. This consultation helped to inform the requirement which was published in the system's output-based specification. Clinicians and users were also involved in evaluating the proof of solution demonstrators developed by suppliers and in evaluating the supplier bids.

In all, the NPfIT has to date hosted around 400 local events involving managers, clinicians, allied health professionals and IT staff. Over 21,000 individuals have been involved as part of a concerted effort to ensure as many people as possible have the opportunity to influence local plans to prepare for phased implementation from summer 2004.

Correspondence

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he expects a reply to be made to the letter to the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, dated 7 April, from the hon. Member for Banff and Buchan, regarding his constituent Mr. T Curran of Banff. [176134]

Miss Melanie Johnson: A reply was sent to the hon. Member for Banff and Buchan on Tuesday 8 June.

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when a letter will be sent to the hon. Member for West Chelmsford concerning Olympus and his constituent, Mr. Dyckhoff, following the meeting which the hon. Member for West Chelmsford had with the Minister of State for Health, the right hon. Member for Barrow and Furness (Mr. Hutton), on 10 March 2004. [177615]

Miss Melanie Johnson: A letter was sent to the hon. Member on 9 June 2004.

Dentistry

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS dentists there have been in Pendle in each year since 1994. [176284]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The number of national health service dentists in the health authority areas covering Pendle since 1994 is given in the table for September each year.

NHS dental services: number of dentists in Lancashire Family Health Service Authority (FHSA), East Lancashire Health Authority (HA) and Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale primary care trust (PCT)

	September each year		
	Lancashire FHSA	*East Lancashire HA*	*Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale PCT*
1994	507	—	—
1995	511	—	—
1996	—	191	—
1997	—	190	—
1998	—	201	—
1999	—	195	—

NHS dental services: number of dentists in Lancashire Family Health Service Authority (FHSA), East Lancashire Health Authority (HA) and Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale primary care trust (PCT)

	September each year		
	Lancashire FHSA	*East Lancashire HA*	*Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale PCT*
2000	—	200	—
2001	—	210	—
2002	—	—	97
2003	—	—	98

Note:
NHS dentists cover dentists working in the general dental service (GDS), hospital dental service (HDS), community dental service (CDS), personal dental service (PDS) and salaried service of the GDS. Dentists working in more than one dental service are included in each service, apart from dentists working in both PDS and GDS who are counted only once.
Source:
Department of Health Statistics

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on NHS dentistry in the Vale of York. [177454]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There are 111 dentists in the Selby and York Primary Care Trust area. The PCT is working with local dentists to develop a dental action plan to improve access to national health service dentistry in the area.

Departmental IT Budget

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what proportion of the Department's IT budget will be assigned to the roll-out of picture archiving and communications systems; and if he will make a statement; [176652]

(2) what the time scale is for introducing picture archiving and communication systems across the NHS. [176653]

Mr. Hutton: Picture archiving and communications system (PACS) technology funded under the national programme for information technology will begin to be introduced across the national health service during summer 2004. The aim is for national coverage to be complete within three years.

In 2004–05, £60 million of central funding—approximately 4 per cent. of total anticipated NHS information management and technology expenditure—will be provided to support investment in buying and implementing PACS. Expenditure on implementing PACS technology in future years will be determined and announced in due course.

Dermatology Waiting Times

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate his Department has made of the impact of the two-week wait rule on dermatology waiting times. [174125]

Mr. Keith Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment he has made of the effect of the two-week wait rule on the management of suspected skin cancers in the North West of England; [175052]

(2) whether his Department plans to conduct an audit of the two-week wait rule for suspected cancer referrals in the North West of England; [175055]

(3) what assessment his Department has made of the impact of the two-week wait rule on dermatology waiting times in the North West of England. [175056]

Miss Melanie Johnson: A two-week out-patient waiting time standard was introduced for urgently referred cases of suspected skin cancer from October 2000. In the last quarter (October to December 2003), 99.5 per cent. of urgently referred patients with suspected skin cancer were seen within two weeks of urgent referral. We have issued general practitioner cancer referral guidelines to assist GPs in determining which patients need to be referred urgently to see a specialist within two weeks, those patients that can be referred for a routine appointment and patients who can be safely watched at a primary care level. The National Institute for Clinical Excellence is currently reviewing the referral guidelines.

The referral guidelines should be used to agree local referral criteria and referral pathways. All national health service trusts have been encouraged to undertake local audit to assess the impact of the two-week wait on local services and to enable the appropriateness of urgent and routine referrals against the guidelines to be fed back to referring GPs.

Doctors (EU Member States)

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many doctors from other EU member states were employed in the NHS in the last year for which data is available. [177457]

Mr. Hutton: As at September 2003, there were 109,964 doctors working in the national health service, of whom 5,379 gained their primary medical qualification outside the United Kingdom but within the European Economic Area.

Embryology

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which licensed fertility clinics are involved in the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority pilot scheme on embryo donation; and if he will make a statement. [175895]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Medical Research Council together with the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) have written a patient information leaflet and a standard consent form to be used for patients who express an interest in donating embryos for the purpose of deriving stem cells. These documents were sent to a number of centres that have a licence to use human embryos to derive stem cells and are contributing to the MRC stem cell initiative. The centres were asked to pilot these documents for three months which ended on 31 March 2004. The feedback forms will then be evaluated by the steering committee of the United Kingdom stem cell bank and for the use of stem cell lines and the HFEA before being finalised and sent to all relevant in vitro fertilisation centres in the UK. The participating centres are as follows:

Assisted Conception Unit, Birmingham Women's Hospital

Assisted Conception Unit, John Radcliffe Hospital

Assisted Conception Unit, University of Aberdeen

Institute for Stem Cell Research, University of Edinburgh

Assisted Conception Unit, Guy's and St. Thomas' Hospital, London

The Bridge Centre, London

Section of Reproductive and Developmental Medicine, The Jessop Wing, Royal Hallamshire Hospital, Sheffield

The Hewitt Centre for Reproductive Medicine, Liverpool Women's Hospital, Liverpool

International Centre at Life, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne

Department of Gene Expression and Development, Roslin Institute, Midlothian

Department of Reproductive Medicine, St. Mary's Hospital, Manchester

Assisted Conception Unit, Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, London

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations his Department has received from members of the public regarding the code of practice for the United Kingdom stem cell bank; and if he will make a statement. [175896]

Miss Melanie Johnson: No representations have been received from members of the public regarding the code of practice for the United Kingdom stem cell bank.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he intends to publish the code of practice for the new United Kingdom stem cell bank; and if he will make a statement. [175897]

Miss Melanie Johnson: An interim code of practice for the United Kingdom stem cell bank is posted on the Medical Research Council website. Some changes may be required after the consultation on the companion code of practice on the use of stem cell lines finishes at the end of this month. The steering committee for the stem cell bank and for the use of stem cell lines will consider the responses to the consultation. The codes of practice are expected to be published by the Medical Research Council in the autumn.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health who the peer reviewers are, appointed by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) to consider the application to the HFEA by Professor Alison Murdoch for a licence to create human embryonic stem cell lines using nuclear transfer and pathenogenically activated oocytes; and if he will make a statement. [175899]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The use of external peer reviewers is an essential part of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) process for evaluating applications for research licences. All applications are sent to at least two reviewers who are asked to determine whether the application comes within the statutory purposes of the 1990 Act (as amended), requires human embryos to fulfil its aims and objectives, requires the numbers and types of embryos outlined in the application, and meets the requirements of the HFEA code of practice including ethical approval and patient information.

Assessment must not only avoid conflict of interest between reviewers and applicants but also avoid circumstances that might give the impression that there is a conflict of interest. Therefore all peer reviewers must declare any conflict of interest in an application that they have been asked to review. Furthermore, peer reviewers have an obligation to protect the ideas and plans of the applicants. The identity of the reviewers of individual research applications is confidential to the HFEA. This confidentiality allows the free exchange of views among reviewers and is in line with the policies of the United Kingdom funding bodies and scientific and medical journals. A list of peer reviewers, current as of 31 August 2003, is published in the HFEA annual report 2002–03 and an updated list will be published on the HFEA website and the next annual report.

Entitlement Cards

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions he has had with his counterparts in the Scottish Executive on the NHS in England and Wales requiring entitlement cards when the Scottish NHS does not; and how this situation would affect Scottish citizens who do not have an entitlement card using the NHS in England and Wales. [176792]

Mr. Hutton: The Home Office has lead responsibility for developing the national identity cards scheme. The introduction of such a scheme is a long-term undertaking and there are on-going discussions to which the Department and Scottish Executive are contributing.

As set out in the draft Identity Cards Bill consultation paper, published on 26 April this year, the registration of individuals and the issue of identity cards will operate on a United Kingdom-wide basis, including if and when the scheme becomes compulsory. However, the use of cards to access services will be a matter for the individual Departments concerned and, in the case of devolved services such as health, for the devolved administrations. We are working together to discuss how any potential differences, including for health service provision, would work in practice.

Epsom and St Helier NHS Trust

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the training issues for maternity services that would apply to a demerger of the Epsom and St. Helier NHS Trust. [176956]

Mr. Hutton: No plans exist within Epsom and St. Helier National Health Services Trust or South West London Strategic Health Authority for the demerger of Epsom and St Helier at this time.

Furthermore, the trust has not undertaken any studies in relation to any services on the effect of a demerger.

EU Council Resolution 92/C172/01

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the implementation of EU Council Resolution 92/C172/01. [176767]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* European Council Resolution 92/C172/01 of 18 June 1992 aims to offer support to the competent authorities of third countries in their efforts to apply the International Code of Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes in their territories.

The European Community cannot legislate for third countries. However, as provided for in Resolution 92/C172/01, the European Commission has instructed its delegations in third countries to serve as contact points for receiving, from the competent authorities in those countries, any complaints about or criticisms of marketing practices in those countries by Community-based manufacturers of infant formulae and follow-on formulae.

Family Clinics

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many attendances at family clinics by people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000, broken down by sex; [176494]

(2) how many women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years were fitted with a contraceptive implant in the Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000. [176497]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to my hon. Friends, the Members for Workington (Tony Cunningham) and for Heywood and Middleton (Jim Dobbin) on 7 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 34–36W.

Food Supplements Directive

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what costs were incurred by the Government in opposing the application of the Health Food Manufacturers Association and the National Association of Health Stores to the High Court in London for referral to the European Court of Justice of their case in relation to the Food Supplements Directive; and if he will make it his policy not to pursue those costs should the case prove unsuccessful. [176582]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The legal costs incurred by the Department in opposing the application of the Health Food Manufacturers Association and the National Association of Health Stores with regards to the Food Supplements Directive were in the region of £13,000. Should the claimants' case prove unsuccessful, it would be normal Government practice to pursue the legal costs incurred.

Foreign Patients

Mr. Lyons: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many trusts were treating foreign patients on the latest date for which figures are available. [176468]

Mr. Hutton: National health service trusts are not required to submit statistics on the nationality of patients treated.

GP Waiting Times

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of NHS patients were able to see a general practitioner within two days within London health authority areas in each year since 1997. [177047]

Mr. Hutton: Data for London strategic health authorities (SHAs) are shown in the table.

Percentage of patients being offered an appointment with a general practitioner within 48 hours

SHA	September 2001[1]	March 2002[1]	March 2003	March 2004
North West London	75.4	69.5	80.0	96.9
North Central London	70.2	58.9	79.8	99.4
North East London	62.6	56.9	82.3	99.3
South East London	68.0	66.2	92.4	96.0
South West London	84.9	77.4	89.6	98.6

[1] Data collected between September 2001 and March 2002 are based on percentage of practices not patients and are not strictly comparable but are included here for completeness. Data for 2001–02 are an aggregation of data originally collected from the then 95 health authorities.

Health Expenditure

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been spent on health in Blackpool North and Fleetwood in each of the last seven years. [175328]

Miss Melanie Johnson: This information is not available in the format requested. Expenditure per weighted head in the Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area, which includes the constituency of Blackpool North and Fleetwood, has increased from £600.03 in 1997–98 to £1,173.57 in 2002–03, the latest year available. However, this does not represent the total expenditure per head as an element of health expenditure cannot be identified by SHA area.

Health Services (Manchester)

Mr. Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on NHS waiting times for heart surgery in Manchester, Blackley. [175013]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In June 1998, the earliest data available, 19 people waited between nine and 11 months and 23 people were waiting 12 months or more for heart surgery in the former Manchester health authority area. In March 2004, no patient waited over nine months for heart surgery in the North Manchester Primary Care Trust area.

Heart Disease

Ann Keen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent research the Department has commissioned into coronary heart disease, with particular reference to the incidence of the disease in Asian communities. [176094]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department has in the last year commissioned a study of the experience of advance heart failure and access to palliative care for south Asian patients and their family carers. Other current research into coronary heart disease commissioned by the Department includes a £0.4 million study of the cost effectiveness of functional cardiac testing in its diagnosis and management; and a review of risk scoring methods and clinical decision aids used in primary prevention.

Heart Surgery (Warrington)

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time was for heart surgery in Warrington hospital *(a)* in 1997 and *(b)* at the latest date for which figures are available. [172847]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In June 1998, earliest data available, eight people waited between nine and 11 months, and six people were waiting 12 months or more for heart surgery in the former North Cheshire Health Authority area. In March 2004, there was no one waiting over nine months for heart surgery in the Warrington Primary Care Trust area.

Mean, median waiting time and number of admissions for finished in-year admissions for elective (waiting time and booked) with main operative procedure K01-K71, national health service hospitals, England 1997–98 and 2002–03

		K01-K71 heart operative procedures	
	PCT of responsibility	1997–98	2002–03
5J2	Warrington PCT		
	Mean waiting time (in-year finished admissions)	58	114
	Median waiting time (in-year finished admissions)	23	84
	Number of in-year finished admissions	362	538

Notes:
Time Waited
Time waited statistics from Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) are not the same as the published waiting list statistics. HES provides counts and time waited for all patients admitted to hospital within a given period whereas the published waiting list statistics count those waiting for treatment on a specific date and how long they have been on the waiting list. Also, HES calculates the time waited as the difference between the admission and decision to admit dates. Unlike published waiting list statistics, this is not adjusted for self-deferrals or periods of medical/social suspension.
Main Operation
The main operation is the first recorded operation in the HES data set and is usually the most resource intensive procedure performed during the episode. It is appropriate to use main operation when looking at admission details, for example, time waited, but the figures for all operations count of episodes give a more complete count of episodes with an operation.
Finished in-year admissions
A finished in-year admission is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within provider, excluding admissions beginning before 1 April at the start of the data year. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
Grossing
Figures are grossed for both coverage and missing/invalid clinical data, except for 2001–02 and 2002–03, which are not yet adjusted for shortfalls.
Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health.

HIV

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps the Department is taking to reduce the number of people contracting HIV each year in England. [176251]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Government published the first ever national strategy for sexual health and HIV in 2001, followed by an implementation action plan in 2002. This is a 10 year strategy, which sets challenging goals to tackle HIV. Action to implement the strategy includes strengthening our HIV prevention work targeting those groups most at risk of infection, the publication last year of standards for HIV treatment and care and the publication of toolkits of best practice to support HIV prevention at local level.

Hospital Developments

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on recent hospital developments taking place within the Greater London area; and if he will list them. [174493]

Mr. Hutton: Within the Greater London area the following hospital developments are taking place.

National Health Service Trust	Estimated capital value (£ million)	Funding[1]	Status
Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust	76	PFI	Pre-procurement
Whipps Cross University Hospital NHS Trust	328	PFI	Pre-procurement
St. Mary's Hospital, Paddington NHS Trust	900	PFI	Pre-procurement
Barts and The London NHS Trust	1052	PFI	In procurement
North Middlesex Hospital NHS Trust	74	PFI	In Procurement
Lewisham Hospital NHS Trust	51	PFI	In procurement
Kingston Hospital NHS Trust	28	PFI	In procurement
University College London Hospitals NHS Trust	422	PFI	Under construction
Whittington Hospital NHS Trust	32	PFI	Under construction
Barnet PCT (Edgware Community)	24	Public	Under construction
Havering, Barking and Redbridge NHS Trust	238	PFI	Under construction
Newham Healthcare NHS Trust	52	PFI	Under construction
North West London Hospitals NHS Trust	69	PFI	Under construction
Brent PCT—Willesden	21	PFI	Under construction
Guy's and St. Thomas' NHS Trust	50	Public	Under construction
Queen Mary's Roehampton	55	PFI	Under construction

[1] PFI = Private finance initiative.

Information on schemes with a capital value below £10 million is not held centrally.

Illegal Drug Users

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people he estimates were illegal drug users in the last year for which figures are available; and what the Government's plans are for reducing the number of people using illegal drugs. [176813]

Miss Melanie Johnson: It is estimated that there are 250,000 Class A problem drug users in England and Wales (Home Office Research Study 2002). Problem

drug users are defined as people who use illegal drugs and experience social, psychological, physical or legal problems.

The Government are committed to tackling substance misuse and launched the updated Drugs Strategy in 2002. The Government are on track to meet the target in this strategy to double the number of people in treatment from 100,000 in 1998 to 200,000 by 2008 and to increase year-on-year the numbers retained or successfully completing treatment.

Independent Treatment Centres

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the contract price of treatments provided by independent treatment centres is expressed as a proportion of the relevant NHS tariff for that treatment. [166077]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 20 April 2004]:* National health service national tariffs do not directly correspond to the packages of care we are purchasing from the independent sector in the treatment centre programme. For example, varying numbers of out-patient appointments and follow-up care are included in the procedure prices of the independent sector treatment centre provider, which are not included in NHS national tariff for individual procedures.

For the single-procedure cataract chain, a price per cataract procedure was at nearly 10 per cent. less than the comparable NHS cost. Further contracts have been signed in relation to treatment centres at Daventry, Bradford, Trent and South Yorkshire, Plymouth, and the national, so-called spine chain. These contracts are for the provision of joint replacements, other orthopaedics and other elective procedures. For these treatment centres, it is not appropriate to directly compare NHS national tariffs with the bid price of providers.

Infertility Treatment

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients have benefited from infertility treatment in *(a)* Shropshire and *(b)* England in each year since 1997. [175635]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information is not collected centrally on the assisted conception services provided to Shropshire patients. The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority collects data on licensed treatments carried out in the United Kingdom. The numbers of patients treated and treatment cycles carried out are shown in the table:

Licensed treatment carried out in the UK, 1997 to 2001

	In vitro fertilisation (IVF)		*Donor insemination*	
	Patients	*Treatment cycles*	*Patients*	*Treatment cycles*
1997	26,291	34,017	5,077	13,169
1998	27,279	35,559	4,453	11,453
1999	26,707	34,684	3,866	9,985
2000	26,548	34,634	3,395	8,102
2001[1]	28,076	35,599	2,718	6,430

[1] 2001 is the most recent year for which information is currently available.

Source:
Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority.

Lumbar Punctures

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how he has satisfied himself that lumbar punctures carried out on children at the Royal Free Hospital by the Inflammatory Bowel Disease Study Group since 1996 have had valid and explicit ethical approval from a properly constituted research ethics committee on the issues of full disclosure of the research's relevant interests and of the full clinical context. [157459]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Based on information currently available to us, the Royal Free Ethics Committee approved the collection of data from clinically indicated investigations for a study entitled "Enteritis and Disintegrative Disorder following measles/rubella vaccination" in November 1996. The disintegrative disorder described in the protocol is Heller's disease, and the vaccine under investigation was measles/rubella vaccine.

We also understand that the study title was changed to "Autism and Non-Specific Colitis and Lymophoid Nodular Hyperplasia" and the name change was approved by the Royal Free Ethics Committee in 1998.

The Ethics Committee gave approval for the collection of data from clinically indicated investigations. The Committee did not take a view on which clinical investigations, such as lumbar puncture, were justified. This would usually be determined for each individual child involved, depending on their condition.

Manchester Children's Hospital

Mr. Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the *(a)* monthly and *(b)* total cost of the delay in building the new Manchester Children's hospital. [176639]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There has been no estimate of the monthly and total cost of the delay in building the new Manchester Children's hospital.

ME

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people his Department estimates had myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME) in Greater London in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by *(a)* sex and *(b)* age group; how much (i) Government and (ii) non-government money has been spent on ME in Greater London since January 2002; if he will list the ME specialists there are in Greater London; and if he will make a statement. [177039]

Mr. Hutton: This information requested is not collected centrally.

This Government are committed to improving services for patients with chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS), which is also known as myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME). This is evidenced by the fact that:

We endorsed the view of the independent working group that CFS/ME is a debilitating and distressing condition, which affects people of all ages.

We have asked the Medical Research Council to develop a research strategy for CFS/ME.

We have asked the National Institute for Clinical Excellence to develop guidelines for the diagnosis and management of CFS/ME.

We have made available £8.5 million to develop services specifically designed for people with CFS/ME.

In line with the Department's "Shifting the Balance of Power" initiative, allocations are made direct to primary care trusts (PCTs). It is now the responsibility of PCTs to commission services which meet the needs of their local populations.

Medical Staff

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* nurses, *(b)* midwives and *(c)* health visitors (i) were in post in 1997 and (ii) are in post; what plans there are for the future numbers of each in the next five years; and if he will make a statement. [176119]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the numbers of nurses, midwives and health visitors employed in the national health service in September 1997 and 2003 is shown in the table.

There are 67,500 more qualified nurses, midwives and health visitors employed in the NHS than in 1997. The Government have already met the NHS Plan, manifesto and delivering the NHS Plan targets for increasing the nursing workforce and is on course to meet the NHS Plan target for increasing the number of students entering training to become a nurse or midwife. The Government acknowledge that there are still more staff needed in these areas and we shall focus on increasing training places, retaining nursing staff and filling existing vacancies, it is for local NHS organisations to determine the number of nurses needed locally.

NHS HCHS: qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff as at 30 September each specified year

Headcount

	1997	*2003*
Qualified nursing, midwifery and HV staff	318,856	386,359
Of which:		
Registered midwife	22,385	23,941
Health visitor	12,410	12,984

Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census.

Mersey Regional Ambulance Service

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps are being taken to reduce sickness absence in the Mersey Regional Ambulance Service; and what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of these policies. [176926]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* The information is not collected centrally. The measures used to address sickness absence rates within an organisation are matters for individual national health service organisations.

Ministerial Visits

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the travel costs incurred by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each Minister within his Department, for each of the last 10 years. [175652]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Expenditure details are available for the Department from the financial year 1994–95 and are shown in the table. The Department's finance systems do not maintain information by individual Ministers for each year.

Departmental travel costs

£

	Expenditure
1994–95	4,437,078
1995–96	4,307,684
1996–97	5,847,922
1997–98	6,592,081
1998–99	5,814,365
1999–2000	7,080,034
2000–01	7,295,706
2001–02	7,972,843
2002–03	7,607,890
2003–04	[1]8,211,382

[1] Provisional

MMR Vaccine

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what scientific assessment he has made of the paper published in The Lancet in 1998 by Dr. Andrew Wakefield on the possible links between the MMR vaccine and autism; what research has been commissioned by his Department on the subject since the publication of Dr. Wakefield's paper; and if he will place in the Library copies of scientific critiques of Dr. Wakefield's paper commissioned or endorsed by his Department. [156637]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Government's independent scientific advisory body, the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM), has reviewed the work of Dr. Wakefield on the postulated association between measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccines and the development of autism and inflammatory bowel disease. This has included the study published in The Lancet in 1998. CSM has kept this issue under continual review and has consistently concluded that the available evidence does not support a causal association. The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has also kept this issue under close review and is in full agreement with the CSM.

A study, subsequently published in The Lancet in 1999, was commissioned by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (then the Medicines Control Agency) to look at the occurrence of autism in children born within the North Thames region before and after the introduction of MMR vaccination. The results of this study do not support the suggested causal association between MMR vaccine and autism.

At the Chief Medical Officer's request, the Medical Research Council (MRC) held an independent scientific seminar on 23 March 1998 to review the work of Dr. Wakefield's group. At this seminar, Dr. Wakefield and his colleagues were given time fully to present their work including the data from the 1998 Lancet study. The meeting concluded that there was no evidence to indicate any link between MMR vaccination and bowel

disease or autism and no reason for a change in the MMR vaccination policy. The Chief Medical Officer endorsed the conclusions of the MRC panel.

Nurses

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many nurses were employed in hospitals in Liverpool in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003. [173662]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

National health service hospital and community health services: qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff including practice nurses employed by unrestricted principals and equivalents[1] (UPEs) in each specified organisation as at 30 September each specified year

headcount

	1997	*2003*
Total specified organisations	4,544	7,626
North Liverpool Primary Care Trust (PCT)	n/a	246
Central Liverpool PCT	n/a	554
South Liverpool PCT	n/a	152
Liverpool Cardiothoracic NHS Trust	336	528
Royal Liverpool Children's Hospital NHS Trust	684	788
Clatterbridge Centre for Oncology NHS Trust	98	142
Walton Centre for Neurology/Neurosurgery NHS Trust	187	271
Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospital NHS Trust	1,567	1,948
Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	1,185	1,120
Liverpool Women's Hospital NHS Trust	487	699
Mersey Care NHS Trust	n/a	1,178

n/a = not applicable.

Note:
UPEs include general medical services unrestricted principals, personal medical services contracted general practitioners (GPs) and personal medical services salaried GPs.

Sources:
1. Department of Health non-medical workforce census.
2. Department of Health general and personal medical services statistics.

Overseas Medical Treatment

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have been sent abroad for medical treatment during the last 12 months. [174499]

Mr. Hutton: A total of 353 people were sent abroad for medical treatment commissioned by the national health service in the last 12 months.

Percutaneous Endoscopic Gastrostomy

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidelines govern the use of percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy on patients with *(a)* cerebral palsy, *(b)* multiple sclerosis, *(c)* spina bifida, *(d)* cystic fibrosis, *(e)* Huntingdon's disease and *(f)* acquired brain injury (i) generally and (ii) for patients who are in receipt of residential care and support services provided by public, private or voluntary organisations. [178097]

Dr. Ladyman: We have not issued guidelines for this technique. The aim of percutaneuous endoscopic gastrostomy is to feed those who cannot swallow.

The National Institute of Clinical Excellence issued guidelines in 2003 on the prevention of healthcare associated infections in primary and community care. The recommendations provide guidance on infection prevention and control precautions that should be applied by all healthcare personnel and carers.

Peripheral Vascular Disease

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in the last year suffered from peripheral vascular disease in *(a)* Rugby and Kenilworth and *(b)* England. [174963]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The table shows the number of finished admission episodes relating to peripheral vascular disease broken down by relevant primary care trusts (PCTs) in Rugby and Kenilworth, and the overall count for England in 2002–03.

	Number
North Warwickshire PCT	248
Rugby PCT	71
England	60,023

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health.

Ports

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many Port Health Authority officials were employed at UK *(a)* seaports and *(b)* airports in each of the last five years. [177156]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The requirement for employing Port Health Authority (PHA) officials at seaports and airports rests with local authorities who are responsible for port health work. The number of PHA officials is determined by the local authorities, and their numbers are not held centrally.

Private Nursing Homes

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the last review of *(a)* registration and *(b)* inspection procedures for privately-run nursing homes took place. [177817]

Dr. Ladyman: The current registration and inspection procedures for care homes were put in place in 2002, when the National Care Standards Commission was established and the regulations and national minimum standards for care homes were introduced. The Commission for Social Care Inspection became operational in April 2004 and operates under the same regulatory framework.

Public Bodies

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how often the *(a)* independent group on teenage pregnancy, *(b)* joint committee on vaccination and immunisation, *(c)* patient information advisory group and *(d)* expert advisory group on AIDS are scheduled to convene; and on what date each last met. [175332]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The independent advisory group on teenage pregnancy is the responsibility of my

right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Education and Skills. Meetings of the joint committee on vaccination and immunisation are convened three times a year; the last meeting was on 6 February 2004. Meetings of the patient information advisory group are convened four times a year, but have the flexibility to meet more frequently if required; the last meeting was on 28 April 2004. Meetings of the expert advisory group on AIDS are convened three times a year; the last meeting was on 8 March 2004.

Radiographers

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS training places for *(a)* diagnostic and *(b)* therapeutic radiographers there were in each year since 1997. [176754]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is shown in the table. Between 1996–97 and 2002–03, the number of training places for radiographers have increased by 634, or 107 per cent.

Radiography training commissions

	1996–97	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Radiography	593	582	646	685	761	948	1,227
Of which:							
Diagnostic	452	447	507	541	597	730	942
Therapeutic	141	135	139	144	164	218	285

Source:
Department of Health quarterly monitoring returns.

Rheumatological/Musculoskeletal Conditions

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioners hold a specialist interest in *(a)* rheumatological conditions, *(b)* musculoskeletal conditions and *(c)* orthopaedics; and what steps are being taken to increase these numbers. [171930]

Mr. Hutton: There are now some 1,300 general practitioners with a special interest (GPwSIs). However, information on the number of general practitioners with a special interest in particular specialties is not collected centrally.

In line with "Shifting the Balance of Power", the expansion of the range of services provided in primary care, though the development of new staff roles, such as GPwSIs, should be locally driven. Primary care trusts are therefore responsible for developing GPwSIs' services in accordance with their local health economy need to improve access for patients.

Sexual Health

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many cases of sexually transmitted infections were reported in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex; [176493]

(2) how many cases of sexually transmitted infections in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex; [176495]

(3) what the prevalence rate of reported cases of sexually transmitted infections was in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years was in Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex; [176496]

(4) what the prevalence rate of reported cases of sexually transmitted infections in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years was in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex. [176498]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to my hon. Friends, the Members for Workington (Tony Cunningham) and for Heywood and Middleton (Jim Dobbin) on 25 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1610–11W.

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many cases of sexually transmitted infections were reported in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex; [176838]

(2) what the prevalence rate of reported cases of sexually transmitted infections in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years was in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex; [176839]

(3) how many cases of sexually transmitted infections in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years were reported in Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex; [176841]

(4) what the prevalence rate of reported cases of sexually transmitted infections in people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years was in Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) disease and (ii) sex. [176843]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to my hon. Friends, the Members for Workington (Tony Cunningham) and for Heywood and Middleton (Jim Dobbin) on 25 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1610–11W.

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many attendances at family clinics by people aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16,

(g) 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years there were in Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000, broken down by sex; [176840]

(2) how many women aged *(a)* 11, *(b)* 12, *(c)* 13, *(d)* 14, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 16, *(g)* 17, *(h)* 18 and *(i)* 19 years were fitted with a contraceptive implant in the Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority in each year since 2000. [176842]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to my hon. Friends, the Members for Workington (Tony Cunningham) and for Heywood and Middleton (Jim Dobbin) on 7 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 34–36W.

Trastuzumab

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what percentage of breast cancer patients diagnosed in the past 12 months received treatment with Trastuzumab; [176867]

(2) what percentage of patients diagnosed with breast cancer were tested for HER2 in the last year for which figures are available. [176868]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department does not collect information on the percentage of breast cancer patients who receive treatment with Herceptin or who are tested for human epidermal growth factor receptor 2.

Professor Mike Richards, National Cancer Director, has been asked to investigate the variation in uptake of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence approved chemotherapy drugs, including Herceptin. His report is due to be published shortly.

Trust Boards

Mr. Lyons: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what analysis his Department has made of the composition of trust boards in England, with particular reference to the *(a)* age, *(b)* nationality and *(c)* gender of members. [176480]

Mr. Hutton: Analyses of the age, ethnicity and gender of national health service board members are carried out by the NHS appointments commission, and data relating to 1 April 2004 will be published shortly in their annual report for 2003–04. In the meantime, I have asked the chair of the commission, Sir William Wells, to write to my hon. Friend with the latest data available.

United Healthcare Group

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will place in the Library a copy of the scoping report on implementation of the Evercare model of care, completed in February 2003 by United Healthcare Group. [175807]

Mr. Hutton: UnitedHealth Group submitted a scoping report to each individual primary care trust (PCT), and these remain the property of the PCTs.

vCJD

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the latest scientific evidence on infection rates for vCJD, with particular reference to links with BSE. [176127]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* The Government seek scientific advice on matters relating to spongiform encephalopathies from the spongiform encephalopathy advisory committee (SEAC). SEAC is provided with all published research on variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (vCJD) as it is available. The committee's consideration of scientific research is recorded in the minutes of SEAC meetings which are available at the website: www.seac.gov.uk

Waiting Lists

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients are awaiting *(a)* admission and *(b)* out-patient assessment in each national health service trust in Greater London. [177048]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the number of patients waiting for elective in-patient admission at national health service trusts and primary care trusts within the five London strategic health authorities is shown in the table. Information on the total number of patients waiting for outpatient appointments is not collected centrally.

Patients waiting for elective in-patient admission: NHS trusts and PCTs within London SHAs: Position at 31 March 2004

NHS trust/PCT	*Total number of patients waiting for admission*
Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS Trust	10,697
Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust	7,861
Barts and the London NHS Trust	8,468
Bromley Hospitals NHS Trust	4,881
Chelsea and Westminster Healthcare NHS Trust	2,913
Ealing Hospital NHS Trust	2,145
Epsom and St. Helier NHS Trust	4,565
Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Trust	1,630
Guy's and St. Thomas' Hospital NHS Trust	7,846
Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust	5,548
Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust	1,972
Homerton Hospital NHS Trust	902
King's College Hospital NHS Trust	4,871
Kingston Hospital NHS Trust	5,609
Lewisham Hospital NHS Trust	3,577
Mayday Healthcare NHS Trust	5,091
Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Trust	3,258
Newham Healthcare NHS Trust	1,510
Newham PCT	1
North Middlesex Hospital NHS Trust	2,262
North West London Hospitals NHS Trust	6,495
Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Trust	3,573
Queen Mary's Sidcup NHS Trust	2,977
Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Trust	2,233
Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust	6,639
Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	229
Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust (London)	2,889
St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	5,418
St. Mary's NHS Trust	3,911
SW London and St. Georges NHS Trust	41
University College London Hospitals NHS Trust	4,833
West London Mental Health NHS Trust	14
West Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust	1,639
Whipps Cross University Hospital NHS Trust	5,165
Whittington Hospital NHS Trust	1,598

Source:
DH form KH07

Waiting Times

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of patients were assessed by a specialist within two weeks of emergency referral in the last year for which figures are available. [176862]

Miss Melanie Johnson: A two week out-patient waiting time standard was introduced for all urgent referrals of suspected cancer during 2000. Performance against this standard is collected quarterly with the table showing performance for the last four available quarters. Further data on cancer waiting times targets is available at www.performance.doh.gov.uk/cancerwaits/

	Percentage of patients
2002–03	
Qtr 4	96.3
2003–04	
Qtr 1	96.9
Qtr 2	97.7
Qtr 3	98

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Animal Rights Extremism

5. **Mrs. Anne Campbell:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what action she has taken to combat the threat of animal rights extremism. [177755]

Ms Hewitt: Government have taken considerable action to combat animal rights extremists, both through legislation and by support for the police to deal with their criminal activities. The Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 gave the police a new power to direct protestors away from homes when such protests are intimidatory or harassing. It amended the Protection from Harassment Act and the Malicious Communications Act to cover co-ordinated campaigns of harassment and sending harassing emails and made provision for a secure register of company directors' home addresses where those directors are at risk of intimidation and harassment.

Recently, we have introduced further legislation in the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 that strengthened police powers to deal with smaller, intimidatory protests and office occupations by extremists. Government are also funding a new police unit to provide tactical guidance on policing extremists.

But intimidation and harassment continues to be a very serious problem that threatens investment and research in the bioscience sector in the UK, so we are looking carefully, and urgently, at what further action is needed to strengthen police powers to deal with the tactics employed by extremist protestors.

UK Directors

14. **Vera Baird:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she is taking to ensure that the talent pool of UK directors is sufficiently diverse. [177766]

Jacqui Smith: Following the publication of the Higgs and Tyson reports, and the "Brighter Boards" booklet last year, my Department organised a series of roundtable meetings with leading companies in order to raise awareness about the case for greater diversity on boards and to gather examples of good practice.

We have also commissioned research to assess the current representation of directors from diverse backgrounds on FTSE 100 boards, and supported the creation of registers for board positions, co-ordinated by the appropriate professional and affiliated bodies.

We are currently consulting the Financial Reporting Council and a range of business and other organisations on how best to build on these initiatives and will be making an announcement later in the year.

Low Pay

15. **James Purnell:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on her policy on low-paid workers. [177767]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government have done a great deal through the minimum wage and tax credits to help the low paid. From October 2004, the minimum wage, in conjunction with tax credit and other benefits will provide a guaranteed minimum income of at least £252 a week for families with one child and one adult earner in full-time work, working 35 hours per week.

Call Centres

17. **Mr. Pike:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment her Department has made of future employment prospects in the call centre industry in *(a)* the North West and *(b)* the UK. [177769]

Ms Hewitt: We have not assessed future employment prospects in individual regions. The recently published DTI study on the UK Call Centre Industry found that employment in the industry is growing and predicts that it will directly employ over 1 million people by 2007 across the UK.

A50-A514 Link Road

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations have been made to the East Midlands Regional Development Agency concerning the funding for completing the road linking the A50 at the A514 junction at Chellaston with Wilmore Road in Derby. [176750]

Jacqui Smith: No representations have been made. However, the East Midlands Development Agency (emda) has been working with Rolls Royce, other landowners and developers who have an interest in the 88ha Chellaston park site, with the intention of establishing a development consortium. A key part of the development would be the creation of a link road between the A50 and the A514. The viability of the site is impacted upon by the cost of developing this infrastructure. In March 2004 emda's Board approved £70,000 to fund a feasibility study into the viability of the project, which would address the issues around the road infrastructure. The report is due to be completed by the end of the year.

Business (Blackpool and Fleetwood)

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new businesses have started up in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood since 1997. [175883]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 115,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in the last quarter of 2003, including 500 business start-ups in Blackpool Unitary Authority (which includes part of the Blackpool, North and Fleetwood constituency). Data are not available for the Wyre local authority that includes the rest of Blackpool, North and Fleetwood Constituency. In the last quarter of 2003 there were 2,600 business start-ups in the County of Lancashire (which includes the Wyre local authority) excluding Blackpool Unitary Authority.

The latest yearly figures show 465,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2003. This represents a 19 per cent. increase on the year before. In 2003 there were 1,700 business start-ups in Blackpool Unitary Authority (which includes part of the Blackpool, North and Fleetwood constituency). Data are not available for the Wyre local authority that includes the rest of Blackpool, North and Fleetwood Constituency. In 2003 there were 10,200 business start-ups in the County of Lancashire (which includes the Wyre local authority) excluding Blackpool Unitary Authority.

DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for Blackpool Unitary authority and Wyre local authority (for which Blackpool, North and Fleetwood is a constituency) are shown in the following table for the period 1997 to 2002. Data for 2003 will be available in autumn 2004.

VAT registrations: 1997 to 2002

	Blackpool	*Wyre*
1997	340	260
1998	325	300
1999	310	240
2000	315	240
2001	300	245
2002	265	265

Source:

Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2002, Small Business Service www.sbs.gov.uk/statistics/vatstats.php

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

Centres of Vocational Excellence

Mr. Flight: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether regional development agencies have contributed *(a)* funds and *(b)* resources to centres of vocational excellence. [176901]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I have been asked to reply.

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) is responsible for funding and resourcing the development of CoVEs. However, Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) view CoVEs as strategic partners and may choose to provide complementary funding and resources to maximise their impact. This enables RDA funding to be targeted where further investment will enable the CoVE to meet anticipated skills needs.

A number of RDAs have already contributed to CoVE development in their region including the South East Development Agency, Yorkshire Forward, the South West Regional Development Agency, Advantage West Midlands and the North West Development Agency.

Coal Health Claims

Paddy Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the *(a)* highest, *(b)* lowest and *(c)* average payment made in respect of (i) chronic bronchitis and emphysema and (ii) vibration white finger is; and what the equivalent figures are for Nottinghamshire. [176548]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* To date the figures are:

£

	COPD		*VWF*	
	UK	*Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Leicestershire*	*UK*	*Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Leicestershire*
Highest settlement	364,537	364,537	113,111	40,127
Average settlement	7,674	5,262	8,288	8,180

Notes:

Settlements can be low or even reduced to nothing if some or all of the factors outlined below have a maximum impact.

1. Compensation offered is dependent on the percentage of disability due to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and the number of years spent underground after 1954, the date of liability. Discounting is then applied, taking into account any smoking history and the number of years worked before 1954. This is consistent with the High Court judgment. In chronic bronchitis (CB) only claims, the maximum amount payable is £5,604 (rising with the RPI), subject to the relevant discounting mentioned previously.

2. Compensation offered in respect of VWF is dependent on the "staging" (the level of disability). Claims are then discounted taking into account any of the five co-morbid conditions as listed in the Claims Handling Agreement. Claims will also be apportioned according to whether there is any co-defendant involvement.

3. Figures for Nottinghamshire are not available separately.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when minimum payment for compensation claims under the Coalminers' Compensation Scheme was last discussed with their representatives. [176801]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 8 June 2004]:* I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave him on 27 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1744.

Mr. Barron: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many claimants have had final settlement through each of the top 10 claims handlers involved in the compensation claims for *(a)* chronic bronchitis and emphysema and *(b)* vibration white finger of former coalminers. [176617]

Nigel Griffiths: To date the figures are:

Top 10 solicitors	*Number of full and final settlements*
VWF	
Hugh James	17,622
Thompsons	17,141
Raleys	12,318
Browell Smith	7,330
Beresfords	6,760
Mark Gilbert Morse	6,495
UDM	5,439
Watson Burton	4,383
Barber and Co.	656
Avalon	388
COPD	
Browell Smith	11,095
UDM	7,234
Thompsons	7,046
Raleys	6,561
Hugh James	6,278
Moss	4,433
Beresfords	4,126
AMS Law	2,919
Watson Burton	2,584
Graysons	1,899

In terms of numbers of COPD claims received, the rank order of the 'top 10' is—Beresfords, Thompsons, Hugh James, Raleys, Browell Smith, Mark Gilbert Morse, Avalon, UDM, Watson Burton, Barber and Co.

In terms of numbers of VWF claims received, the rank order of the 'top 10' is—Thompsons, Browell Smith, Beresfords, UDM, Raleys, Hugh James, Graysons, Moss, Watson Burton, AMS Law.

Mr. Barron: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much has been paid to claimants through each of the top 10 claims handlers involved in the compensation claims for *(a)* chronic bronchitis and emphysema and *(b)* vibration white finger of former coalminers. [176618]

Nigel Griffiths: To date the figures are:

Top 10 solicitors	*Total damages paid (£ million)*
COPD	
Thompson	216.8
Hugh James	198.5
Raleys	129
Browell Smith	77.4
Mark Gilbert Morse	43.7
UDM	26.5
Watson Burton	26
Beresfords	13.4
Avalon	1.2
Barber and Co.	0.45
VWF	
Thompsons	128
Browell Smith	89.8
UDM	72
Raleys	72
Hugh James	58.8
Graysons	49.6
Watson Burton	42.5
Beresfords	39.5
Moss	32.4
AMS Law	22.8

In terms of numbers of COPD claims receive, the rank order of the "top 10" is —Berefords, Thompson, Hugh James, Raleys, Browell Smith, Mark Gilbert Morse, Avalon, UDM, Watson Burton, Barber and Co.

In terms of number of VWF claims received, the rank order of the 'top 10' is—Thompons, Browell Smith, Beresfords, UDM, Raleys, Hugh James, Graysons, Moss, Watson Burton, AMS Law.

Mr. Barron: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many claimants have had interim payments to date through each of the top 10 claims handlers involved in the compensation claims for *(a)* chronic bronchitis and emphysema and *(b)* vibration white finger of former coalminers. [176619]

Nigel Griffiths: To date the figures are:

Top 10 solicitors	*Number of claimants who have received an interim payment*
COPD	
Thompsons	10,895
Hugh James	7,708
Raleys	5,129
Browell Smith	4,048
Mark Gilbert Morse	2,246
UDM	1,323
Watson Burton	1,157
Beresfords	384
Avalon	69
Barber and Co.	8
VWF	
Thompsons	11,723
Raleys	5,752
Browell Smith	5,628
Graysons	5,413
UDM	4,811
Beresfords	4,224
Hugh James	3,899
Watson Burton	3,577
Moss	2,646
AMS Law	1,416

In terms of numbers of COPD claims received, the rank order of the "top 10" is —Beresfords, Thompsons, Hugh James, Raleys, Browell Smith, Mark Gilbert Morse, Avalon, UDM, Watson Burton, Barber and Co.

Mr. Barron: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much has been paid to date to each of the top 10 claims handlers involved in the compensation claims for *(a)* chronic bronchitis and emphysema and *(b)* vibration white finger of former coalminers. [176620]

Nigel Griffiths: To date the figures are:

Top 10 solicitors	*Solicitors costs paid (£ million)*
COPD	
Thompsons	39.7
Hugh James	39.1
Raleys	28.9
Browell Smith	15.9
Mark Gilbert Morse	14.3
Beresfords	9.7
UDM	9.2
Watson Burton	9.1

Top 10 solicitors	Solicitors costs paid (£ million)
Avalon	0.7
Barber and Co.	0.1
VWF	
Thompsons	9.1
Browell Smith	8.7
Raleys	6.6
Hugh James	5.8
UDM	5.5
Graysons	3.8
Beresfords	3.2
Watson Burton	3.1
Moss	2.9
AMS Law	1.9

In terms of numbers of COPD claims received, the rank order of the "top 10" is —Beresfords, Thompsons, Hugh James, Raleys, Browell Smith, Mark Gilbert Morse, Avalon, UDM, Watson Burton, Barber & Co.

In terms of numbers of VWF claims received, the rank order of the "top 10" is—Thompsons, Browell Smith, Beresfords, UDM, Raleys, Hugh James, Graysons, Moss, Watson Burton, AMS Law.

Combustion Plant Directive

Mr. Kevin Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) if she will list the meetings that she has held with the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to discuss the large Combustion Plant Directive; [175585]

(2) if she will list the meetings which have taken place between her *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials and (i) Ministers and (ii) officials in the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to discuss the large Combustion Plant Directive;. [175586]

Mr. Timms: There have been a number of discussions about this Directive between Ministers and officials in the DTI and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Further information about such meetings is being withheld under the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information on the grounds that it would harm the frankness and candour of internal deliberation and of confidential communications between departments.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on progress made in investigating issues raised by the UN Panel of Experts on the illegal exploitation of the natural resources and other forms of wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. [177752]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Following the publication of the UN Expert Panel's final report in October 2004, we asked the UN for the documentary evidence supporting the listing of British companies in Annexe III of the report. This is a list of all entities the Panel considers to be in breach of the OECD guidelines. Despite repeated requests, we have only recently received documentary material that the Panel obtained relating to the British companies considered by the Panel. This material is wide ranging in scope and quality. We are currently assessing this material to identify outstanding issues with relation to breaches of the OECD Guidelines. We are in the process of approaching the companies concerned to respond to specific issues raised in the documentation. The UN National Contact Point for the OECD Guidelines has recently made a statement relating to allegations made against De Beers that is available on the website and that I will place in the Libraries of the House.

Election Literature (Postal Services)

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the refusal by some postal workers to deliver election literature from *(a)* the British National Party and *(b)* other political parties. [176719]

Mr. Timms: Royal Mail has legal obligations, under the Representation of People Act 2000, to deliver election material from any properly nominated candidate, so long as the material is legal. Royal Mail recognises that staff may have strong feelings about the delivery of some election mailings. The company has always tried to have a flexible approach, so if an individual feels that they are unable to deliver the material because of personal circumstances or beliefs, or where an individual believes that delivery of a particular item may incur personal risk, then alternative arrangements will be made.

EU Trade

Sir Teddy Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of the negative balance in trade in goods was with the EU *(a)* in the most recent annual period for which figures are available, *(b)* in 1994, *(c)* in 1984 and *(d)* in 1974. [177760]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: In 2003, the EU 15 countries accounted for 46 per cent. of the UK's total trade deficit in goods with the world. In 1994 the EU 15 countries accounted for 41 per cent., in 1984 55 per cent. and in 1974 42 per cent.

However, these figures taken in isolation do not fully reflect the importance to the UK economy of our trade with the EU.

Heat Pumps

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what action her Department is taking to encourage the development of *(a)* ground source and *(b)* air source heat pumps. [176759]

Mr. Timms: Defra and the DTI supported the formation of the UK Heat Pump forum which serves to disseminate information and promote the technology for both ground source and air source heat pumps.

Heat pumps are a technology that is eligible for support from Carbon Trust programmes. I understand that the Carbon Trust has two projects in contract supporting ground source heat pumps. The Enhanced Capital Allowance scheme, which the Carbon Trust manages, supports heat pumps.

The Clear Skies initiative supports the installation of ground source heat pumps by providing grants of £1,200 to householders and 50 per cent. of installed cost for

community groups up to a maximum of £100,000. It does not currently provide grants for air source heat pumps. Budget 2004 also announced the introduction of a reduced rate of VAT on the installation of ground source heat pumps.

Information Technology

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the *(a)* migration of information technology work overseas and *(b)* steps her Department is taking to reverse the trend towards migration of IT work overseas. [171399]

Ms Hewitt: The Government are well aware of concerns about the effects of offshoring, including on employment in the IT sector. But we know from consultation with key stakeholders that there is a broad consensus in the UK that trade protectionism is not the right response. Instead, we must do all we can to ensure that those who are affected by decisions to offshore work are found alternative work as quickly as possible. We also need to ensure that the UK remains competitive and an attractive place in which other countries wish to do business and it is important to note that the UK remains the lead country in terms of inward investment into the EU. We are also working closely with the RDAs and the Learning and Skills Councils to ensure that the UK is equipped to meet these challenges.

In this globalised world, companies require the flexibility to take the required steps to remain internationally competitive. Location is ultimately a business decision for companies, and the Government cannot prohibit moves offshore. However the Government continue to create the macro-economic environment to encourage business location and growth within the UK.

Finally, offshoring is not a one-way process. Successful Indian IT companies such as Tata, Wipro and Infosys, have invested in the UK and have created and expanded employment here.

Contractual Leave

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 12 May 2004, *Official Report,* column 431W, on leave, if she will place in the Library the surveys on the provision of contractual leave and pay referred to. [176438]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The following surveys referred to in my answer are available in the Libraries of the House:

The Second Work-Life Balance Study: Results from the Employer Survey (DTI Employment Relations Research Series No.22);

The Second Work-Life Balance Study: Results from the Employees' Survey (DTI Employment Relations Research Series No.27); and

Maternity and Paternity Rights in Britain 2002: Survey of Parents (DWP In-house Report 131).

Manufacturing Industry

Ms Coffey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, what action she is taking to help small and medium-sized UK manufacturing companies. [177762]

Nigel Griffiths: The DTI and Government have taken a number of measures including:

Establishing the Manufacturing Advisory Service

Providing £600 million support for business R&D through R&D tax credit

Increasing the number of Modern Apprenticeship trainees from 75,000 in 1997 to 255,00 in 2004

Cutting corporation tax

Manufacturing SMEs also benefit from DTIs business support products for Knowledge Transfer, R&D, Best Practice

Maternity Leave

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many and what percentage of women in Wirral, South have taken 26 weeks' maternity leave since 1997. [177687]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Take-up of maternity leave is not recorded centrally. It is possible to make an estimate of the numbers of women taking maternity leave based on employer returns to Inland Revenue of the Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) they recover (since 2003 this has covered the first 26 weeks of leave). Figures for the take-up of SMP are not available on a regional basis, but nationally around 300,000 women receive SMP each year.

In addition, there will be some women who will qualify for maternity leave but not SMP (because they do not meet the earnings or length of employment criteria for SMP) and similarly some who qualify for SMP but not leave (because they are employed earners for the purposes of SMP but not employees in order to qualify for leave).

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many and what percentage of women in the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale have taken 26 weeks' maternity leave since 1997; and what percentage of those were of Asian origin. [178518]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Take-up of maternity leave is not recorded centrally. It is possible to make an estimate of the numbers of women taking maternity leave based on employer returns to Inland Revenue of the Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) they recover (since 2003 this has covered the first 26 weeks of leave). Figures for the take-up of SMP are not available on a regional basis, but nationally around 300,000 women receive SMP each year. Information is not available on the ethnic origin of women receiving SMP.

In addition, there will be some women who will qualify for maternity leave but not SMP (because they do not meet the earnings or length of employment criteria for SMP) and similarly some who qualify for SMP but not leave (because they are employed earners for the purposes of SMP but not employees in order to qualify for leave).

Minor Titles Consortium

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent representations she has received from the Minor Titles Consortium on the Royal Mail and distribution of their newspapers in Scotland. [177438]

Mr. Timms: I have not received any recent representations from the Minor Titles Consortium about the Royal Mail's distribution of newspapers.

Night Shift Workers

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the benefits to residents of Wirral, South of new rights for night shift workers. [177689]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations came into force on 1 October 1998. The regulations limit working time to 48 hours per week averaged over a 17-week reference period. For night workers the limit is eight hours per day on average, including overtime where it is part of a night worker's normal hours of work. There is no opt-out from the night working time limit.

Night workers are entitled to 11 hours rest between working days, one day's rest per week, and a 20-minute in work rest break if the working period is longer than six hours.

All night workers should be offered a free health assessment before they start working night and thereafter at regular intervals for as long as they are working nights. The health assessments should take account of the nature of the work and the restrictions on a worker's working time under the regulations. Workers who suffer from problems as a result of working at night, should as far as practicable be offered alternative day work.

All workers are entitled to four weeks paid annual leave. There is no specific data available for night shift workers in Wirral, South.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the effect on residents of Bootle of new rights for night-shift workers. [176996]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations came into force on 1 October 1998. The regulations limit working time to 48 hours per week averaged over a 17-week reference period. For night workers the limit is eight hours per day on average, including overtime where it is part of a night worker's normal hours of work. There is no opt-out from the night working time limit.

Night workers are entitled to 11 hours rest between working days, one day's rest per week, and a 20-minute in work rest break if the working period is longer than six hours.

All night workers should be offered a free health assessment before they start working night and thereafter at regular intervals for as long as they are working nights. The health assessments should take account of the nature of the work and the restrictions on a worker's working time under the regulations. Workers who suffer from problems as a result of working at night, should as far as practicable be offered alternative day work.

All workers are entitled to four weeks paid annual leave. There is no specific data available for night shift workers in Bootle.

NIREX

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on the future of NIREX. [177768]

Mr. Timms: The Secretary of State recently met with the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs as part of a regular series of bilateral meetings. The ongoing work on the future of NIREX was discussed as part of that wider meeting.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the involvement of NIREX in drafting the Energy Bill. [177222]

Mr. Timms: NIREX has not been involved in drafting the Energy Bill.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the intended relationship between the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and NIREX. [177223]

Mr. Timms: It will only be possible to set out the relationship between NIREX and the NDA once NIREX and its industry shareholders have been consulted on the future of the company.

Oil and Gas Prices

Mr. Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what action she has taken to investigate reports that speculation in oil and gas is helping to drive up prices. [177080]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* While speculation may be playing a role, there are a number of other factors supporting current oil prices including unanticipated strong demand, tight capacities upstream and downstream, and geopolitical uncertainties.

The oil price is one driver of UK gas wholesale spot and forward prices, as is the market's perception of gas demand and supply. In order to inform the gas market about UK gas market fundamentals, on 24 May 04, the DTI published the Fourth JESS Report which, among other things, monitors the availability of gas supplies, the adequacy of the UK's gas infrastructure, and gas forward prices.

Paid Leave

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents of Wirral, South qualify for paid leave entitlements. [177690]

Mr. Sutcliffe: All workers resident in Wirral, South qualify for paid annual leave entitlements of at least four weeks as set out in the Working Time Regulations. While all women are entitled to 26 weeks ordinary maternity leave, only those who meet the eligibility criteria will be able to claim statutory maternity pay for that period.

All employees in Wirral, South who are eligible will be entitled to take statutory paternity leave with pay and statutory adoption leave with pay.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents of Bootle qualify for paid leave entitlements. [176995]

Mr. Sutcliffe: All workers resident in Bootle qualify for paid annual leave entitlements; at least four weeks as set out in the Working Time Regulations. While all women are entitled to 26 weeks ordinary maternity leave, only those who meet the eligibility criteria will be able to claim statutory maternity pay for that period.

All employees in Bootle who are eligible will be entitled to take statutory paternity leave with pay and statutory adoption leave with pay.

Post Boxes

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the factors that determine the size of a post box available at a particular location. [176737]

Mr. Timms: The size and location of post boxes are the operational concern of Royal Mail Gorup and I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Renewable Energy

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what projections her Department has made of *(a)* the amount and *(b)* the percentage of electricity the UK will be obtaining from renewable sources in each year to 2010. [176740]

Mr. Timms: A working paper showing revised energy projections has recently been published on the DTI website. The projections suggest that electricity generation from renewables could reach 15TWh in 2005 and 39TWh in 2010. Taking account of all sources of generation, some of which are not shown separately in the working paper, these represent around 3.5 per cent. and 10 per cent. of overall supply respectively.

The working paper is available on the website at: http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/sepn/euets.shtml#uep

The Department does not publish projections of year-by-year generation patterns.

Steel

Tony Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the effect of steel *(a)* price increases and *(b)* supply problems on manufacturing industry; and if she will make a statement. [177012]

Jacqui Smith: I am very much aware of concerns about rising steel prices and appreciate that this is an unwelcome pressure on steel consumers at a time when manufacturing is showing signs of recovery. This is a global issue caused primarily by soaring demand in China, which is having a knock on effect on the cost of raw materials such as iron ore, coke and scrap. We acknowledge that the problem is especially difficult for steel users with limited scope to pass on price rises to customers. However, European steel prices are still low compared with USA and South East Asia. There have also been concerns about the availability of steel but I understand that there is no shortage of supply from UK producers although there are reports of tightness of those consumers that rely on imported sources of steel.

The Chinese Government has recently introduced measures to dampen economic growth as a result of which Chinese steel imports have fallen pushing down prices in the Far East. It is hoped that this will bring some stability to world markets although industry analysts expect overall world demand to remain firm for the rest of this year.

VAT-registered Enterprises

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many VAT-registered enterprises there were in each *(a)* region and *(b)* London borough in each of the last 10 years. [177063]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 115,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in the last quarter of 2003. Barclays data are not available for Scotland or Northern Ireland. The latest yearly figures show 465,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2003. This represents a 19 per cent. increase on the year before.

The following tables records Barclays business creation data for each region and London boroughs in 2003. Barclays latest survey of business creation publication only contains 2003 data for regions and London boroughs.

2003

Regions	*Number*
East	47,500
East Midlands	34,700
London	84,300
North East	15,100
North West	57,400
South East	76,300
South West	52,400
West Midlands	38,000
Yorkshire and the Humber	37,700

2003

London boroughs	*Number*
Barking and Dagenham	800
Barnet	4,700
Bexley	1,200
Brent	4,000
Bromley	2,300
Camden	4,500
Croydon	3,800
Ealing	4,500
Enfield	2,200
Greenwich	1,300
Hackney	2,400
Hammersmith and Fulham	3,400
Haringey	2,500
Harrow	2,200
Havering	1,700
Hillingdon	1,700
Hounslow	2,100
Islington	3,000
Kensington and Chelsea	2,500
Kingston upon Thames	1,600
Lambeth	3,000

London boroughs	2003 Number
Lewisham	1,500
Merton	2,000
Newham	1,900
Redbridge	2,600
Richmond upon Thames	2,100
Southwark	1,900
Sutton	1,300
Tower Hamlets	2,600
Waltham Forest	1,700
Wandsworth	4,000
Westminster[1]	6,900

[1] Includes figures for the City of London.

Source:
For tables—Barclays Small Business Survey:
http://www.business.barclays.co.uk/

The stock of businesses registered for VAT in each *(a)* region and *(b)* London borough in each year between 1994 and 2003, are as follows:

VAT registrations in each year

Government office region	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
England	1,378,380	1,374,275	1,377,300	1,393,070	1,426,265
Scotland	120,805	120,475	120,225	120,670	122,260
Wales	80,180	78,480	77,545	77,170	77,390
Northern Ireland	53,410	53,725	54,090	54,635	55,420
North East	43,860	43,500	42,900	42,855	43,080
North West	163,500	161,795	160,445	161,200	163,430
Yorkshire and the Humber	123,270	122,345	121,165	121,600	122,635
East Midlands	112,585	112,380	112,400	112,920	114,830
West Midlands	138,320	137,755	137,545	138,295	140,430
East	161,660	160,980	161,810	163,930	168,355
South East	244,390	243,755	245,470	249,350	257,135
South West	156,680	155,350	154,130	155,190	158,095

VAT registrations in each year

Government office region	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
England	1,458,720	1,479,900	1,498,425	1,505,575	1,505,495
Scotland	123,355	123,565	123,800	123,980	124,200
Wales	77,345	76,905	76,955	76,990	76,310
Northern Ireland	55,980	55,990	55,735	55,810	56,100
North East	43,340	43,600	44,040	43,745	43,825
North West	165,880	167,420	168,970	169,860	169,705
Yorkshire and the Humber	123,770	124,320	124,955	124,605	124,405
East Midlands	116,585	117,605	118,900	119,500	120,455
West Midlands	142,630	143,980	145,615	146,225	146,310
East	172,050	174,450	177,020	177,445	177,915
South East	265,115	270,325	274,475	277,540	278,670
South West	160,725	162,350	163,410	163,795	163,465

VAT registrations in each year

London borough	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Camden	15,555	15,875	16,460	17,175	17,770
Hackney	5,320	5,300	5,385	5,500	5,765
Hammersmith and Fulham	5,900	5,955	6,080	6,260	6,615
Haringey	5,270	5,265	5,265	5,430	5,695
Islington	7,940	8,175	8,395	8,765	9,505
Kensington and Chelsea	7,905	8,070	8,135	8,340	8,660
Lambeth	5,235	5,160	5,245	5,415	5,670
Lewisham	3,790	3,680	3,660	3,685	3,850
Newham	3,230	3,165	3,135	3,100	3,190
Southwark	5,905	5,930	5,975	6,125	6,465
Tower Hamlets	5,560	5,580	5,645	5,715	6,000
Wandsworth	7,270	7,320	7,405	7,700	8,105
Westminster	28,630	29,830	31,245	32,445	33,945
Barking and Dagenham	2,145	2,070	2,175	2,190	2,230
Barnet	12,575	12,870	13,485	14,000	14,730
Bexley	4,505	4,435	4,375	4,450	4,615
Brent	7,270	7,290	7,305	7,435	7,800
Bromley	8,120	8,040	8,030	8,165	8,395
Croydon	8,000	7,835	7,850	7,835	8,010
Ealing	7,935	7,900	7,885	8,095	8,455
Enfield	5,775	5,720	5,725	5,835	6,040
Greenwich	3,425	3,275	3,275	3,320	3,510

VAT registrations in each year

London borough	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*
Harrow	6,655	6,740	6,780	6,860	7,075
Havering	5,350	5,230	5,180	5,225	5,355
Hillingdon	6,725	6,700	6,725	6,795	6,970
Hounslow	5,850	5,760	5,830	5,885	6,085
Kingston upon Thames	4,275	4,320	4,380	4,475	4,720
Merton	4,725	4,670	4,775	4,830	5,095
Redbridge	5,175	5,145	5,120	5,205	5,350
Richmond upon Thames	6,905	6,945	7,150	7,410	7,725
Sutton	4,745	4,730	4,710	4,800	4,930
Waltham Forest	4,255	4,225	4,195	4,215	4,300

VAT registrations in each year

London boroughs	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Camden	17,960	18,375	18,645	18,630	18,420
Hackney	6,230	6,545	6,895	7,095	7,165
Hammersmith and Fulham	7,225	7,665	8,110	8,435	8,490
Haringey	5,935	6,165	6,340	6,420	6,425
Islington	10,115	10,245	10,280	10,280	10,125
Kensington and Chelsea	9,005	9,350	9,640	9,800	9,920
Lambeth	5,960	6,230	6,455	6,675	6,910
Lewisham	4,085	4,230	4,365	4,515	4,535
Newham	3,355	3,505	3,665	3,790	3,865
Southwark	6,870	7,195	7,565	7,910	8,020
Tower Hamlets	6,410	6,825	7,095	7,270	7,450
Wandsworth	8,585	9,020	9,250	9,485	9,610
Westminster	35,445	37,000	37,825	38,480	38,370
Barking and Dagenham	2,155	2,255	2,400	2,490	2,570
Barnet	14,865	14,635	14,425	13,630	12,720
Bexley	4,705	4,830	4,910	4,995	5,035
Brent	8,125	8,330	8,445	8,510	8,480
Bromley	8,740	8,805	8,920	9,050	9,015
Croydon	8,295	8,425	8,540	8,605	8,560
Ealing	8,885	9,240	9,510	9,665	9,745
Enfield	6,330	6,495	6,665	6,710	6,715
Greenwich	3,685	3,785	3,890	3,995	4,045
Harrow	7,325	7,355	7,350	7,330	7,280
Havering	5,515	5,590	5,630	5,695	5,655
Hillingdon	7,215	7,340	7,420	7,410	7,420
Hounslow	6,345	6,575	6,705	6,930	6,920
Kingston upon Thames	4,995	5,205	5,280	5,270	5,195
Merton	5,370	5,500	5,665	5,670	5,590
Redbridge	5,600	5,735	5,860	5,750	5,605
Richmond upon Thames	8,100	8,365	8,560	8,730	8,750
Sutton	5,090	5,175	5,140	5,150	5,115
Waltham Forest	4,515	4,620	4,665	4,655	4,660

Source:
For tables—Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Stocks, Small Business Service, available from www.sbs.gov.uk/analytical/statistics/vatstats.php
Data for 2004 will be available in autumn 2004.

VAT registrations do not capture all business activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

Working Hours

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents of Wirral, South have benefited from a reduction in the working week to 48 hours. [177691]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations provide workers with the right to refuse to work more than 48 hours on average, if they do not want to. Numbers for Wirral, South are not available, however it has been estimated that around 300,000 workers resident in the North West stood to benefit from the introduction of the weekly working time limits in 1998.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Attendance Allowance

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Scotland have applied for attendance allowance since February 2002, broken down by *(a)* disability benefit centre and *(b)* quarter. [176761]

Maria Eagle: The information requested is in the table.

	All	Edinburgh	Glasgow
May 2002[1]	7,250	3,675	3,575
August 2002	9,665	4,905	4,760
November 2002	9,540	5,070	4,470
February 2003	8,785	4,625	4,160
May 2003	10,550	5,475	5,075
August 2003	10,465	5,275	5,190
November 2003	10,430	5,330	5,100
February 2004	8,905	4,570	4,335

[1] March data are unavailable for this quarter

Notes:

Figures taken from a 100 per cent. sample at the end of each quarter.

Figures are rounded to the nearest 5.

Source:

IAD Information Centre

Child Support Agency

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when those Child Support Agency cases enrolled under the old rules will be converted to the new rules system. [177974]

Mr. Pond: I refer my right hon. Friend to the Written Answer I gave the hon. Member for Castle Point (Bob Spink) on 18 December 2003, *Official Report*, column 1092W.

Council Tax Benefit

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people are in receipt of council tax benefit in the City of Edinburgh local authority area. [176735]

Mr. Pond: The number of council tax benefit recipients in the City of Edinburgh at August 2003 is 38,100.

Notes:

1. The data refer to benefit units, which may be a single person or a couple.
2. The figure is rounded to the nearest hundred.
3. Figures for non-responding authorities are estimated.
4. Council tax benefit data excludes Second Adult Rebate cases.

Source:

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Management Information System, Quarterly 100 per cent. caseload stock-count taken in August 2003.

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the cost to local authorities of administering council tax benefit; and if he will make a statement. [176739]

Mr. Pond: The information is in the table.

Cost of administering council tax benefit

	£ million
England	229
Wales	12
Scotland	19
Great Britain	259

Notes:

1. Figures are for reported net current expenditure in 2002–03. Amounts are rounded to the nearest £ million. The sum of the individual countries does not equal the Great Britain total due to rounding.
2. Figures for England are provided by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.
3. Figures for Wales are provided by the Welsh Assembly.
4. Figures for Scotland are provided by the Scottish Executive.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost was of administering council tax benefit payments in *(a)* Greater London and *(b)* each London borough in each of the last five years. [177186]

Mr. Pond: The information is in the table.

Net cost of administering Council Tax benefit in nominal terms

£ million

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
Total Greater London	38.4	39.3	45.0	52.4	47.7
Of which:					
Inner London					
City of London	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Camden	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.4	1.5
Greenwich	0.8	0.8	0.8	2.2	2.5
Hackney	1.9	2.0	1.9	4.0	3.2
Hammersmith and Fulham	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.6
Islington	1.5	1.3	1.2	3.2	3.3
Kensington and Chelsea	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.5
Lambeth	3.1	3.4	5.0	5.6	2.2
Lewisham	0.9	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.0
Southwark	0.8	1.4	1.2	1.1	1.2
Tower Hamlets	2.4	2.3	2.8	2.9	3.0
Wandsworth	1.0	1.5	1.5	1.7	2.0
Westminster	2.2	2.1	2.0	2.3	2.3
Outer London					
Barking and Dagenham	0.8	0.7	1.2	1.3	0.8
Barnet	1.2	1.2	1.5	1.6	1.8
Bexley	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6
Brent	1.3	1.2	1.9	1.5	1.2

Net cost of administering Council Tax benefit in nominal terms

£ million

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
Bromley	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6
Croydon	0.9	1.0	1.3	1.2	1.3
Ealing	1.7	2.0	2.3	2.7	0.9
Enfield	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.9
Haringey	0.8	1.1	1.2	1.4	1.5
Harrow	0.4	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.9
Havering	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.4	0.9
Hillingdon	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.5
Hounslow	1.3	1.4	2.2	2.2	2.3
Kingston	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.4	0.7
Merton	0.8	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Newham	2.7	2.2	2.9	2.5	3.2
Redbridge	0.3	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
Richmond	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4
Sutton	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5
Waltham Forest	3.3	1.9	1.8	1.7	1.9

Notes:
1. The figures shown are reported net current expenditure, in nominal terms.
2. All figures are provided to the nearest £0.1 million. The total greater London figure shown may not be the sum of the individual authorities due to rounding.

Source:
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what the value was of council tax benefit payments made in *(a)* Greater London and *(b)* each London borough in each of the last five years; [177187]

(2) what the value was of council tax benefit payments made in *(a)* Greater London and *(b)* each London borough in each of the last five years; and what estimate he has made of the total amount of council tax benefit unclaimed in each of those years. [177188]

Mr. Pond: The information requested about the total amount of unclaimed council tax benefit is not available below national level. Estimates of the total amount of council tax benefit unclaimed at a national level can be found in a series of DWP reports entitled: "Income Related Benefits Estimates of Take-Up". The latest publication relates to financial year 2001–02; copies of this and previous reports are available from the Library.

The value of council tax benefit payments made in each London borough and greater London as a whole, from 1998–99 to 2002–03 is in the table.

Council tax benefit expenditure in nominal terms

£million

Greater London	1998–99	1999–2000	Outturn 2000–01	2001–02	2002–03[1]
City of London	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Camden	18.3	18.0	17.4	18.0	18.9
Greenwich	18.0	16.6	15.9	16.2	16.9
Hackney	20.2	17.2	19.3	24.2	26.1
Hammersmith	12.0	11.9	12.1	12.5	12.7
Islington	22.4	20.5	19.7	19.0	18.6
Kensington and Chelsea	5.8	5.9	6.2	6.8	7.6
Lambeth	18.2	16.8	17.3	19.1	20.1
Lewisham	14.8	14.5	14.8	15.7	16.9
Southwark	18.5	18.0	18.8	19.6	20.5
Tower Hamlets	14.6	14.7	15.4	16.4	17.4
Wandsworth	5.3	5.7	5.8	6.4	5.6
Westminster	4.7	4.8	4.8	6.0	6.5
Total Inner London	172.9	164.8	167.6	180.1	187.9
Barking	9.9	10.2	10.5	11.3	12.1
Barnet	12.1	12.1	12.5	13.3	14.0
Bexley	7.1	7.6	7.5	8.0	8.3
Brent	12.4	13.2	14.5	15.0	16.7
Bromley	7.7	8.3	8.8	9.7	10.2
Croydon	13.2	13.5	13.7	13.6	13.9
Baling	12.2	13.0	12.1	14.5	14.6
Enfield	13.3	13.5	14.6	16.0	17.0
Haringey	22.6	22.5	22.3	21.6	21.9
Harrow	7.3	7.5	8.1	9.0	9.6

Council tax benefit expenditure in nominal terms

£million

Greater London	1998–99	1999–2000	Outturn 2000–01	2001–02	2002–03[1]
Havering	8.1	8.6	9.3	9.9	10.7
Hillingdon	9.6	10.2	10.7	11.7	12.6
Hounslow	10.7	10.8	11.0	11.7	12.6
Kingston	3.7	4.2	4.5	5.0	5.5
Merton	7.5	7.5	7.7	8.3	8.6
Newham	17.7	16.8	17.6	18.2	19.1
Redbridge	9.1	9.4	9.9	10.3	10.9
Richmond	5.6	6.0	6.3	6.8	7.3
Sutton	6.0	5.9	5.8	6.3	6.9
Waltham Forest	14.9	14.4	14.2	14.8	15.4
Total Outer London	210.7	215.3	221.7	234.8	248.2
Total Greater London	383.6	380.1	389.3	414.9	436.1

[1] Estimated

Notes.

1. All expenditure figures are rounded to the nearest £0.1 million and therefore may not add up to the total greater London expenditure.
2. Expenditure figures for 1998–99 to 2001–02 are final outturn figures supplied by local authorities in 'final audited' subsidy claims. The figures for 2002–03 are the latest available estimated outturn figures, provided by local authorities in their 'initial final' subsidy claims, and are subject to revision in the final audited' claims.
3. Figures are total yearly amounts paid to beneficiaries, regardless of the source of funding, and includes payments subsidised by DWP, those funded through local authorities housing revenue accounts, spending financed by the National Asylum Support Service, and benefit spending financed from local authorities' general funds.

Source:

1. 1998–99—Final Audited Subsidy claim forms submitted by local authorities.
2. 2002–03—Initial Final Claim forms submitted by local authorities.

Disability Living Allowance

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether he has any plans to change the upper age limit for eligibility for the Disability Living Allowance; and if he will make a statement. [177511]

Maria Eagle: No. It is normal for pensions and benefits schemes to contain different provisions for people at different stages of their lives and disability living allowance is focused on providing extra help to people who are severely disabled early, or relatively early, in life.

Attendance allowance provides help with the disability-related extra costs of people who experience the onset of disability after age 65. Based on the need for personal care, this help is part of the wide range of support that the Government make available to older people so that they can have a decent and secure income in retirement and share fairly in the rising prosperity of the country.

Employers' Liability Insurance

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many businesses have been prosecuted by the Health and Safety Executive for operating without employers' liability compulsory insurance in each of the last five years; and what the total level of fines imposed upon these businesses was. [176981]

Jane Kennedy: The number of businesses which have been prosecuted by the Health and Safety Executive for operating without Employers' Liability Compulsory Insurance in each of the last five years is as follows.

Prosecutions (cases heard)

1999–2000	4
2000–01	4
2001–02	12
2002–03	9
2003–04	6
Total	35

The total level of fines imposed upon these businesses for each of the last five years was:

Total fines

1999–2000	1,150
2000–01	1,950
2001–02	16,300
2002–03	4,425
2003–04	3,050
Total	26,875

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what progress has been made since his Department's report in June 2003 on employer liability insurance on proposals to reduce the numbers of uninsured firms. [177528]

Jane Kennedy: The Department published a Second Stage Report on Employers' Liability Compulsory Insurance (ELCI) on 4 December 2003 which outlines current and future work on enforcement issues to reduce the number of uninsured firms. A copy of the report is available in the Library.

Enforcement is undertaken on a day-to-day basis by Health and Safety Executive (HSE) inspectors and recent HSE research indicates a high level of compliance, over 99 per cent. Despite this high level of

compliance the Department is considering the costs and benefits of a compliance database with HSE and the Association of British Insurers (ABI).

In addition, in April we published through the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) website new Government procurement guidance to ensure compliance from bodies that contract with the public sector. A notice has been issued centrally to heads of procurement in other Government Departments and public bodies about the guidance and uptake and operation of the guidance will be evaluated in October.

On 30 March the Department published a Partial Regulatory Impact Assessment about a review of the requirement for ELCI for limited companies that employ only their owner. A copy is available in the Library.

Football Supporters

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many football supporters who have travelled abroad to football championships *(a)* have been investigated for possible infringement of benefit rules, *(b)* have had benefits withdrawn and *(c)* had overpayments identified, broken down by football championship. [177534]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available.

Health and Safety (Corporate Responsibility)

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will place in the Library a copy of the Health and Safety Commission's report on the effectiveness of the current strategy to promote director's responsibility for health and safety. [177446]

Jane Kennedy: The Health and Safety Commission wrote to the Minister for Work in January of this year advising of progress and the way forward on the measures to improve corporate responsibility for Health and Safety including Directors responsibility.

This advice, which the Minister of Work accepted, was based on research which concluded that further legislation was not necessary, that the voluntary approach was working and that this approach should be continued.

I am placing a copy of the research reports in the Library.

Health and Safety Executive

Andrew Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how the Health and Safety Executive is financing the revenue costs of the 12 extra Band Five posts it is internally recruiting for in the North West region of the Executive; and what their total annual revenue costs will be in a full financial year. [176722]

Jane Kennedy: Eleven Band 5 posts are being filled in the North West Division by HSE's internal vacancy filling process in June 2004. Eight of these posts formed part of the North West pilot project which was set up in June 2003 to strengthen HSE's front line capacity and engage with more stakeholders. To ensure that the pilot was cost neutral, a number of inspectors in the division were redeployed to other parts of HSE.

Following the success of the pilot, these eight posts are being consolidated. In addition, three other Band 5 posts are being created to extend the model to the Construction Division in the North West. These will be funded through a change in the grade mix in HSE's Field Operations Directorate.

The substantive filling of these posts will attract no additional costs.

Housing Benefit

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what changes have been made to housing benefit to support the policy that 16 to 17-year-old lone parents should be housed in semi-independent adult-supervised accommodation. [177541]

Mr. Pond: The ODPM have extended the Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) (England) Order 2002, to give priority need to homeless 16 and 17-year-olds (who are not relevant children under the purposes of section 23a of the Children Act 1989). In practice, this means 16 and 17-year-olds will be assisted under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 (priority need) and applies to a person to whom a local authority owes a duty to provide accommodation under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 (provision of accommodation for children in need).

No changes to housing benefit were required to support this policy.

Income Support

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for what reason income support recipients are not automatically transferred to pension credit, housing benefit and council tax benefit when they reach 60 years. [177394]

Mr. Pond: Pension credit is not a continuation of income support but is a different social security benefit with different qualifying conditions. Anyone receiving income support who reaches age 60 on or after 6 October 2003 will have to make a new application for pension credit. Arrangements have been put in place to ensure customers are informed of this in advance of reaching age 60.

Housing benefit and council tax benefit are different benefits with different qualifying conditions based on a liability to pay rent and council tax respectively. Determining entitlement to housing benefit and council tax benefit, and notifying customers of their entitlement is also the responsibility of local authorities.

Pension Credit

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in Inverness East, Nairn and Lochaber are eligible for pension credit; and what the take-up rate is. [177037]

Malcolm Wicks: Information on the number of people who are eligible for pension credit is not available in respect of individual constituencies. However, we estimate that approximately 350,000 pensioner households in Scotland (rounded to the nearest 50,000) are eligible for pension credit in 2004–05. At 31 May 2004 there were 3,555 households, comprising 4,210

individuals (rounded to the nearest five), in receipt of pension credit in the Inverness East, Nairn and Lochaber constituency.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

British Students (Overseas Courses)

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many British students undertook *(a)* part of their British undergraduate degree programme, *(b)* their whole undergraduate degree, and *(c)* a post-graduate qualification abroad in each year since 1990. [164848]

Alan Johnson: The latest available information is shown in the table. Figures for earlier years are not held centrally.

Students form the UK studying all or part of their course overseas

	Undergraduate exchange students on year out abroad[1]	*UK students studying the whole of their course abroad*[2]
1994/95	2,650	26,400
1995/96	3,275	n/a
1996/97	3,940	n/a
1997/98	3,710	26,200
1998/99	4,580	26,900
1999/2000	5,470	27,600
2000/01	4,700	25,400
2001/02	4,940	n/a
2002/03	9,770	n/a

n/a = not available

[1] Figures for 2002/03 include non-exchange language students, which are excluded for the figures for previous years.

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

[2] Estimated. Covers all courses; figures are not available for undergraduate and postgraduate courses separately.

Source:

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

CCTV

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many secondary schools have installed CCTV systems. [176624]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Schools and local education authorities make their own decisions about the level of security they feel best meets their needs, and information about security equipment, including CCTV systems, is not held centrally. My Department has provided information and guidance about school security that can be obtained free of charge from the Department's publication centre or accessed via the Department's website at www.dfes.gov.uk/schoolsecurity.

Education (Over-40s)

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding will be made available in each year up to 2007–08 to provide those over the age of 40 years with a first Level 2 qualification; and if he will make a statement. [176420]

Alan Johnson: The Department allocates funds for education and training in the post-16 learning and skills sector to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The Department has allocated a total of £6.3 billion to the LSC for learning participation in 2004–05. It is for the LSC to use these funds for adult and youth programmes to meet the Government's funding priorities. The Department has no plans to allocate specific funding to the LSC for the provision of a first Level 2 qualification to those over the age of 40 years. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has announced the Spending Review 2004 settlement for the Department for the years 2005–06 to 2007–08, highlighting the importance this Government attach to education and skills. It is too early to say what this settlement will mean for the funding of learning participation up to 2007–08.

Education Authority Areas

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list for each local education authority the *(a)* number and *(b)* proportion of residents of (i) primary school and (ii) secondary school age not educated within that local education authority, and the (A) number and (B) proportion of school pupils of (1) primary school and (2) secondary school age not resident within the local education authority. [174863]

Mr. Miliband: Tables giving the requested information for all local education authorities have been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Further Education Colleges

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of the £1.2 billion provided to further education colleges for the period 2003 to 2006 has been allocated to *(a)* Government targets for growth in (i) 16 to 19- year-old students, (ii) adult students, *(b)* changes in pension entitlements and *(c)* changes in the level of national insurance contributions. [177388]

Alan Johnson: In November 2002 the Secretary of State announced plans to increase assumed funding for further education (FE) allocated to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) by £1.2 billion in 2005–06, when compared to 2002–03. In 2005–06 the proportion of additional assumed funding in FE for planned increases in the number of 16 to 18-year -old full time equivalent (FTE) learners, and those aged 19 and above, is 29 per cent. and 11 per cent. respectively. Funding was not allocated for colleges specifically for changes in the level of national insurance contributions. Colleges are expected to meet these costs from the significant additional investment we are making in FE. Funding to colleges for changes to employer contributions to the Teachers Pension Scheme is over and above the £1.2 billion increase.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of young people between the ages of 16 and 21 years were studying at further education colleges, excluding A-level and GCSE students, in *(a)* greater London and *(b)* each London borough in each of the last five years. [177042]

Alan Johnson: Participation rates are routinely available at local education authority level. The proportions of 16 to 21-year-olds residents of greater

London studying at further education colleges in 2001 and 2002, excluding GCSE and A-Level students, are shown in the following table.

Proportions of 16 to 21-year-old residents of greater London studying at FE colleges (excluding A-level and GCSE students) by local education authority of residence and year

Percentage

Local education authority	*November 2001*	*November 2002*
City of London	7	6
Camden	9	8
Greenwich	14	14
Hackney	21	20
Hammersmith and Fulham	14	13
Islington	16	15
Kensington and Chelsea	10	9
Lambeth	21	22
Lewisham	17	18
Southwark	17	19
Tower Hamlets	14	15
Wandsworth	14	15
Westminster	10	8
Barking and Dagenham	14	14
Barnet	14	14
Bexley	15	14
Brent	17	17
Bromley	11	10
Croydon	18	17
Ealing	16	16
Enfield	18	18
Haringey	22	21
Harrow	19	18
Havering	18	18
Hillingdon	15	14
Hounslow	14	13
Kingston upon Thames	9	8
Merton	16	16
Newham	23	21
Redbridge	14	14
Richmond upon Thames	12	12
Sutton	14	14
Waltham Forest	20	21
Greater London	16	16

Source:
LSC Individualised Student Record
LSC Individualised Learner Record
ONS/GAD population estimates

The percentages in this table are produced using post-Census population estimates. However we are currently unable to provide a historical series on a comparable population basis. Further information concerning this issue can be found in the Department's Statistical First Release, "Participation in Education, Training and Employment by 16–18 Year Olds in England: 2001 and 2002" available online at: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000426/index.shtml.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many full-time equivalent students have been educated at each of the further education colleges on Merseyside in each year. [177265]

Alan Johnson: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Mark Haysom the Council's Chief Executive will write to my hon. Friend with the information requested and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Learning and Skills Council

Mr. Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what he expects the funding gap between school sixth forms and further education colleges to be in *(a)* 2004–05, *(b)* 2005–06 and *(c)* 2006–07. [176822]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* The Government have set out its investment plans for 2003–04 to 2005–06 which should enable the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to increase funding for further education significantly. For the academic year 2003/04, base funding rates per qualification increased by 3 per cent. for school sixth forms and by 4.5 per cent. for further education colleges on a broadly comparable basis. Our expenditure plans to 2005–06 should see this trend continue. Although the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced on 17 March the Spending Review settlement for the Department for the years 2005–06 to 2007–08, Ministers have yet to determine funding allocations and priorities within the Department. It is therefore too early to say what impact this settlement will have on the funding of schools, sixth forms and further education colleges.

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to equalise funding between schools and colleges for 16–19 years olds in Weston-Super-Mare. [176979]

Alan Johnson: The Government have set out its investment plans for 2003–04 to 2005–06 which should enable the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to increase funding for further education significantly. For the academic year 2003/04, core funding rates per qualification increased by 3 per cent. for school sixth forms and by 4.5 per cent. for further education colleges on a broadly comparable basis. Our expenditure plans to 2005–06 should see this trend continue.

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to provide funding to help further education colleges in Weston-Super-Mare to refurbish and rebuild their estates. [176980]

Alan Johnson: All of the Department's post-16 learning and skills sector capital investment is allocated to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The Department does not provide a specific budget to the LSC for rebuilding and refurbishing property in further education colleges at either the local or regional levels. It is for the LSC to determine for itself the right level of capital investment in further education colleges. Mr. Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will write to the hon. Member on this matter and a copy of his reply will be placed in the House Library.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to equalise funding between schools and colleges for 16 to 19-year-olds in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. [177011]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* The Government have set out its investment plans for 2003–04 to 2005–06 which should enable the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to increase funding for further education significantly. For the academic year 2003/04, core funding rates per qualification increased by 3 per cent. for school sixth forms and by 4.5 per cent. for

further education colleges on a broadly comparable basis. Our expenditure plans to 2005–06 should see this trend continue.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much capital expenditure has been allocated to each further education college on Merseyside since 1995. [177261]

Alan Johnson: All of the Department's post-16 learning and skills sector capital investment is allocated to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The Department does not provide a specific budget to the LSC for rebuilding and refurbishing property in further education colleges at either the local or regional levels, and does not collect this information. It is for the LSC to determine for itself the right level of capital investment in further education colleges. This is an operational matter for the LSC. Mr. Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will write to my hon. Friend on this matter and a copy of his reply will be placed in the House Library.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding each further education college on Merseyside received in each year since 1997; what budget they have been allocated from the Learning and Skills Council for 2004–05; and what percentage change these allocations represent in comparison with the previous year. [177263]

Alan Johnson: The Department allocates funds for education and training in the post-16 learning and skills sector to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The LSC decides the funding allocations at individual college level. Information about these allocations is not collected by the Department. This is an operational matter and the responsibility of the LSC. Mark Haysom, the LSC's Chief Executive, will write to my hon. Friend with this information and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Maintenance Allowances

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will publish his assessment of the impact of the Education Maintenance Allowance pilots on participation in work-based training. [174857]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The analysis of the impact of the Education Maintenance Allowance pilot on participation in work based training is not published. The analysis showed minimal impact. I refer the hon. Member to the response given to his previous question on this matter on 11 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1725W.

Irish Language (Pharmacy)

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether pharmacy is taught in the Irish language at tertiary level at institutions in the UK. [177199]

Alan Johnson: I have responsibility for higher education in England only. However, information on individual subjects that may be taught in the Irish language in English higher education institutions is not available centrally.

DEFENCE

Armando Nuclear Test

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he has made arrangements under the 1958 US-UK Mutual Defence Agreement on atomic energy matters, as amended, to obtain the test results from the Armando sub-critical nuclear test at the Nevada test conducted on 25 May by the US National Nuclear Security Administration. [177067]

Mr. Ingram: There are regular United Kingdom/United States exchanges on a range of nuclear stockpile stewardship matters under the auspices of the 1958 UK/US Mutual Defence Agreement (Cmd 537 as amended). These exchanges have included briefings on the scope and outcome of US sub-critical experiments carried out at the Nevada Test Site, precise details of which are being withheld under the terms of Exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. Data from sub-critical experiments, which are consistent with our obligations under the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, is valuable in maintaining confidence in the safety and reliability of our nuclear weapons. A review of the science behind this programme was published in Nature in February 2002.

Augusta Westland

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what effect he expects the sale of GKN's shares in Augusta Westland to Finmeccancia of Italy will have on the completion date of the assessment phase for the Lynx replacement; and when he expects to make a decision on the awarding of the contract for that programme. [177594]

Mr. Ingram: The sale of GKN's shares in Augusta Westland will have little effect on the completion date of the assessment phase of the Battlefield Light Utility Helicopter/Surface Combatant Maritime Rotorcraft programmes. The assessment phase is currently scheduled to complete later this year. The decision on the future of these programmes is most likely to be made early in 2005.

BAE Systems

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether concerns over the tender procedures for the upgrading of helicopters in Bulgaria were discussed at the meeting held on 2 December 2003 between the Minister for the armed forces and the Bulgarian Air Force commander, General Dimiter Georgiev. [175795]

Mr. Ingram: I met with the Bulgarian Deputy Defence Minister and senior Bulgarian Defence personnel on 2 December 2003. A wide range of issues were discussed and no concerns were raised over the tender procedures for the upgrading of helicopters in Bulgaria.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether officials of his Department have held meetings at which the BAE Systems bid for the upgrading of helicopters in Bulgaria was discussed which were attended by Prince Kyril Saxe-Coburg of Bulgaria. [175802]

Mr. Ingram: No record has been traced of Prince Kyril Saxe-Coburg of Bulgaria attending any meeting on this subject held with officials from the Ministry of Defence.

Commercial Exportation Levy

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much money was received through the commercial exportation levy in each of the last four years. [176431]

Mr. Ingram: The value of receipts collected by the Defence Bills Agency in respect of Commercial Exploitation Levies over the last four years was as follows:

Financial year	*Receipt (£ million)*
2000–01	14.51
2001–02	14.64
2002–03	10.46
2003–04	11.83

Contaminated Land (Portsmouth)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the letter of 24th May, on possible contaminated land in Portsmouth, what requests he has received for details of such land from Portsmouth city council in the last five years. [177139]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence holds records of four requests during the last five years, from Portsmouth city council, for details on potential contaminated land. These requests were associated with environmental issues and proposed development on defence property in the City of Portsmouth.

The four sites are: HM Naval Base, HMS Excellent, Fort Southwick and Horsea Island. Primarily these questions relate to development and are associated with the Department's Planning Consultation process. In regard to Horsea Island, there have been long-term discussions with the Environment Agency on the remediation of the lagoon.

Training Accidents

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many training accidents have occurred in the Army in the last five years for which figures are available, broken down by *(a)* deaths, *(b)* serious injuries and *(c)* injuries; [176020]

(2) what definition he uses of a road traffic accident for the purposes of statistical recording; and, in the past two years, what proportion of deaths through road traffic accidents involved service personnel *(a)* on exercise, *(b)* on regular duties and *(c)* off duty. [176021]

Mr. Caplin: The reporting of vehicle related accidents within the Ministry of Defence is based upon the following: the accident involves injury; a third party; or Ministry of Defence vehicles and equipment only. Those accidents resulting in a fatality or injury to any individual or those which involve a third party are regarded as road traffic accidents (as defined in law). Those which result in damage to military vehicles only are classified as incidents.

During the period 1 January 2002 to 31 December 2003, Ministry of Defence units and establishments reported a total of 10,363 road traffic accidents and 7,113 incidents. There were 118 Service fatalities; of these, seven were on operations/exercise and a further 14 on other duties. There were 97 off duty Service fatalities during this period. Details of accidents involving vehicles privately owned by Service personnel are not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Defence Bodies

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks were employed on average in the (i) Defence Storage and Distribution Agency, (ii) Defence Postal and Courier Service, (iii) Defence Transport and Movements Agency, (iv) Deputy Chief Defence Logistics, (v) Army Base Repair Organisation, (vi) DG Defence Logistics Command Information Systems, (vii) Defence Aviation Repair Agency and (viii) Logistics Information Systems Agency management groups in financial year 2000–01; [176129]

(2) how many *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks were employed on average in the (i) Defence Storage and Distribution Agency, (ii) Defence Postal and Courier Service, (iii) Defence Transport and Movements Agency, (iv) Deputy Chief Defence Logistics, (v) Army Base Repair Organisation, (vi) Command Information Systems, (vii) Defence Aviation Repair Agency, (viii) Logistics Information Systems Agency and (ix) Non Disaggregated Funds management groups in financial year 1999–2000; [176138]

(3) how many *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks were employed on average in the (i) DG Equipment Support (Land), (ii) Director Land Service Ammunition, (iii) Defence Clothing and Textiles Agency, (iv) Warship Support Agency, (v) DG Fleet Support (Operations), (vi) DG Equipment Support (Air), (vii) Defence Communication Services Agency, (viii) Defence Fuels Group and (ix) DG Support Army HQ management groups in financial year 2000–01; [176143]

(4) how many *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks were employed on average in the (i) Internal Costs and (ii) Programme Account management groups in financial year 2001–02; [176147]

(5) how many *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks were employed on average in the (i) Defence Vetting Agency, (ii) Finance Directors, (iii) Defence Analytical Services Agency, (iv) Defence Bills Agency, (v) Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Commitments), (vi) Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Personnel), (vii) Defence Housing Executives, (viii) Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency and (ix) Defence Geographical and Imaging Intelligence Agency management groups in the financial year 2001–02; [176157]

(6) how many full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians were employed on average in the (i) Defence Export Services Organisation, (ii) Chief Constable MOD Police, (iii) Chief Scientific Adviser, (iv) Defence Estates Organisation, (v) Policy Director, (vi) Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Equipment Capability) (vii) Civilian Management, (viii) Pay and Personnel Agency and (ix) Director General Information management groups in the financial year 2000–01; [176158]

(7) how many full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians and how many (i) officers and (ii) other ranks were employed on average in the (A) Defence Vetting Agency, (B) Finance Directors, (C) Defence Analytical Services Agency, (D) Defence Bills Agency, (E) Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Commitments), (F) Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Personnel), (G) Defence Housing Executive, (H) Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency and (I) Defence Geographical and Imaging Intelligence Agency management groups in the financial year 2000-01; [176159]

(8) how many full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians were employed on average in the (i) Defence Export Services Organisation, (ii) Chief Constable MOD Police, (iii) Chief Scientific Adviser, (iv) Defence Estates Organisation, (v) Policy Director, (vi) Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Equipment Capability) (vii) Civilian Management, (viii) Pay and Personnel Agency and (ix) Director General Information management groups in financial year 1999–2000; [176155]

(9) what the average number of *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks employed in the (i) Internal Costs and (ii) Personnel Account management group was in the financial years (A) 1999–2000 and (B) 2000–01; [176164]

(10) what the average number of full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians employed in the (i) Army Personnel Centre, (ii) Queen Victoria School, (iii) Duke of York Royal Military School, (iv) Army Training and Recruiting Agency, (v) Service Children's Education, (vi) Army Programmes, (vii) General Staff, (viii) Adjutant General Higher Level Budget and (ix) Royal Military College Shrivenham management group was in financial year (A) 2000–01 and *(b)* 2001–02; [176166]

(11) what the average number of full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians employed in the (i) Personnel Management Agency, (ii) Training Group Defence Agency and (iii) Core HQ management group was in financial years (A) 1999–2000, (B) 2000–01 and (C) 2001–02; [176167]

(12) what the average number of full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians employed in the (i) Internal Costs and (ii) Programme Account management group was in financial year 1999–2000; [176168]

(13) what the average number of *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks employed in the (i) 1 Group, (ii) 2 Group, (iii) 3 Group, and (iv) Deputy Commander-in-Chief management group was in financial years (A) 2000–01 and (B) 2001–02; [176172]

(14) what the average number of full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians employed was in the (i) 1 (UK) Armoured Division, (ii) 2nd Division, (iii) 3rd Division, (iv) 4th Division, (v) 5th Division, (vi) Training and Theatre Groups, (vii) Joint Helicopter Command, (viii) UK Support Command (Germany) and (ix) Land Support management group in financial year 2001–02; [176176]

(15) what the average number of full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians employed in the (i) Flag Officer Training and Recruitment, (ii) Naval Secretary and (iii) HQ management group was in financial year 2001–02; [176178]

(16) what the average number of *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks employed by the General Officer Commanding Northern Ireland top level budget-holder was in financial year (i) 1999–2000, (ii) 2000–01 and (iii) 2001–02; [176181]

(17) what the average number of *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks employed in the (i) 1 Group, (ii) 11/18 Group, (iii) 38 Group, (iv) Directly Administered Units, (v) Chief of Staff and (vi) Works and Land management group was in financial year 1999–2000; [176186]

(18) what the average number of full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians employed in the (i) Chief of Defence Intelligence, (ii) Defence Intelligence and Security Centre, (iii) Surgeon General, (iv) Defence Secondary Care Agency, (v) Defence Dental Agency, (vi) Medical Supplies Agency, (vii) Defence Medical Training Organisation, (viii) Central Banking and Fund Management, (ix) DG Information and Communication Services and (x) Defence Communication Services management group was in financial year 1999–2000; [176188]

(19) what the average number of *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks employed in the (i) Flag Officer Naval Aviation, (ii) Fleet HQ, (iii) Flag Officer Surface Flotilla, (iv) Flag Officer Submarines, (v) Commandant General Royal Marines, (vi) Commodore Royal Fleet Auxiliary and (vii) non-disaggregated funds management group was in financial year 1999–2000; [176192]

(20) how many full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians were employed on average in the (i) DG Equipment Support (Land), (ii) Direct Land Service Ammunition, (iii) Defence Clothing and Textiles Agency, (iv) Warship Support Agency, (v) DG Equipment Support (Air), (vi) Defence Communication Services Agency and (vii) Defence Fuels Group management group in financial year 2001–02; [176197]

(21) how many *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks were employed on average in the (i) Naval Training and Recruiting Agency, (ii) Naval Manning Agency, (iii) HQ, (iv) Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff and (v) Fleet Accommodation Centres management group in financial year 1999–2000; [176211]

(22) how many full time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians were employed on average in the (i) DG Equipment Support (Land), (ii) Director Land Service Ammunition, (iii) Defence Clothing and Textiles Agency, (iv) Warship Support Agency, (v) DG Fleet Support (Operations), (vi) DG Equipment Support (Air), (vii) Defence Communication Services Agency, (viii) Defence Fuels Group and (ix) DG Support Army HQ management groups in financial year 2000–01; [176246]

(23) how many full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians were employed on average in the (i) Army Personnel Centre, (ii) Queen Victoria School, (iii) Duke of York Royal Military School, (iv) Army Training and Recruiting Agency, (v) Service Children's Education, (vi) Army Programmes, (vii) General Staff, (viii) Adjutant General and (ix) Royal Military College Shrivenham management group in financial year 1999–2000; [176214]

(24) what the average number of full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians employed in the (i) Chief of Defence Intelligence, (ii) Defence Intelligence and Security Centre, (iii) Surgeon General, (iv) Defence Secondary Care Agency, (v) Defence Dental Agency, (vi) Medical Supplies Agency, (vii) Defence Medical Training Organisation and (viii) Central Banking and Fund Management group was in financial year 2000–01; [176196]

(25) what the average number of full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians employed by the Major Customers Research Budgets top level budget-holder was in financial year (i) 1999–2000 and (ii) 2000–01; [176191]

(26) what the average number of *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks employed in the (i) 1 (UK) Armoured Division, (ii) 2nd Division, (iii) 3rd Division, (iv) 4th Division, (v) 5th Division, (vi) Command HQ, (vii) Scotland, (viii) Capital Works and (ix) UK Support Command (Germany) management group was in financial year 1999–2000; [176184]

(27) what the average number of full time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians employed in the (i) Commodore Naval Aviation, (ii) Fleet HQ, (iii) Flag Officer Surface Flotilla, (iv) Flag Officer Submarines, (v) Commandant General Royal Marines, (vi) Commodore Royal Fleet Auxiliary and (vii) Non-Disaggregated Funds management group was in financial year (A) 2000–01 and (B) 2001–02; [176180]

(28) how many *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks were employed on average in the (i) Defence Export Services Organisation, (ii) Chief Constable MOD Police, (iii) Chief Scientific Adviser, (iv) Defence Estates Organisation, (v) Policy Director, (vi) Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Systems), (vii) Civilian Management, (viii) Pay and Personnel Agency and (ix) Director General Information management groups in financial year 1999–2000; [176154]

(29) what the average number of *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks employed in the (i) Personnel Management Agency, (ii) Training Group Defence Agency and (iii) Core HQ management group was in the financial year (A) 1999–2000, (B) 2000–01 and (C) 2001–02; [176163]

(30) what the average number of *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks employed in the Chief of Staff management group was in the financial year 2000–01; [176161]

(31) how many *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks was employed on average in the (i) British Forces Cyprus, (ii) Permanent Joint Headquarters, (iii) British Forces Falkland Islands, (iv) British Forces Gibraltar and (v) Sovereign Base Areas Administration management groups in financial year 2001–02; [176149]

(32) what the average number of *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks and full time equivalent (i) industrial and (ii) non-industrial civilians employed in the (A) Defence Vetting Agency, (B) Finance Director, (C) Defence Analytical Services Agency, (D) Defence Bills Agency, (E) Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Commitments), (F) Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Personnel), (G) Defence Housing Executive, (H) Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency and (I) Defence Geographical and Imaging Intelligence Agency management groups was in financial year 1999–2000; [176144]

(33) how many *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks were employed on average in the (i) British Forces Cyprus, (ii) Permanent Joint Headquarters, (iii) British Forces Falkland Islands, (iv) British Forces Gibraltar and (v) Sovereign Base Areas Administration management groups in financial year 2000–01; [176141]

(34) how many full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians were employed on average in the (i) Defence Storage and Distribution Agency, (ii) Defence Postal and Courier Service, (iii) Defence Transport and Movements Agency, (iv) Deputy Chief Defence Logistics, (v) Army Base Repair Organisation, (vi) DG Defence Logistics Command Information Systems, (vii) Defence Aviation Repair Agency, (viii) Logistics Information Systems Agency and (ix) Non Disaggregated Funds management groups in financial year 1999–2000; [176139]

(35) how many *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks were employed on average in the (i) DG Equipment Support (Land), (ii) Director Land Service Ammunition, (iii) Defence Clothing and Textiles Agency, (iv) Ships Support Agency, (v) Naval Base and Supply Agency, (vi) DG Equipment Support (Air) (vii) Defence Communication Services Agency, (viii) Defence Fuels Group and (ix) DG Support Army HQ management groups in financial year 1999–2000; [176136]

(36) how many full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians were employed on average in the (i) Defence Storage and Distribution Agency, (ii) Defence Postal and Courier Service, (iii) Defence Transport and Movements Agency, (iv) Deputy Chief Defence Logistics, (v) Army Base Repair Organisation, (vi) DG Defence Logistics Command Information Systems, (vii) Defence Aviation Repair Agency and (viii) Logistics Information Systems Agency management groups in financial 2000–01; [176130]

(37) how many full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians were employed on average in the (i) DG Equipment Support (Land), (ii) Director Land Service Ammunition, (iii) Defence Clothing and Textiles Agency, (iv) Ships Support Agency, (v) Naval Base and Supply Agency, (vi) DG Equipment Support (Air) (vii) Defence Communication Services Agency, (viii) Defence Fuels Group and (ix) DG Support Army HQ management groups in financial year 1999–2000; [176137]

(38) how many full time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians were employed on average in the (i) British Forces Cyprus, (ii) Permanent Joint Headquarters, (iii) British Forces Falkland Islands, (iv) British Forces Gibraltar and (v) Sovereign Base Areas Administration management groups in financial year 2001–02; [176150]

(39) how many full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians and how many (i) officers and (ii) other ranks were employed on average in the (A) Defence Export Services Organisation, (B) Chief Constable MoD Police, (C) Chief Scientific Adviser, (D) Defence Estates Organisation, (E) Policy Director, (F) Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Equipment

Capability) (G) Civilian Management, (H) Pay and Personnel Agency and (I) Director General Information management groups in the financial year 2001–02; [176156]

(40) what the average number of *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks employed in the (i) 1st (UK) Armoured Division, (ii) 2nd Division, (iii) 3rd Division, (iv) 4th Division, (v) 5th Division, (vi) Command HQ, (vii) UK Support Command (Germany), (viii) Joint Helicopter Command and (ix) Land Support management groups was in the financial year 2000–01; [176160]

(41) what the average number of *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks employed in the (i) Army Personnel Centre, (ii) Queen Victoria School, (iii) Duke of York Royal Military School, (iv) Army Training and Recruiting Agency, (v) Service Children's Education, (vi) Army Programmes, (vii) General Staff, (viii) Adjutant General Higher Level Budget and (ix) Royal Military College Shrivenham management group was in financial year (A) 2000–01 and *(b)* 2001–02; [176165]

(42) what the average number of *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks employed in the (i) British Forces Cyprus, (ii) Permanent Joint Headquarters, (iii) British Forces Falkland Islands, (iv) British Forces Gibraltar and (v) Sovereign Base Areas Administration management group was in financial year 1999–2000; [176169]

(43) what the average number of full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians employed in the (i) 1 (UK) Armoured Division, (ii) 2nd Division, (iii) 3rd Division, (iv) 4th Division, (v) 5th Division, (vi) Command HQ, (vii) UK Support Command (Germany), (viii) Joint Helicopter Command and (ix) Land Support management groups was in financial year 2000–01; [176171]

(44) what the average number of *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks employed in the (i) Commodore Naval Aviation, (ii) Fleet HQ, (iii) Flag Officer Surface Flotilla, (iv) Flag Officer Submarines, (v) Commandant General Royal Marines, (vi) Commodore Royal Fleet Auxiliary and (vii) Non-Disaggregated Funds management group was in financial year (A) 2000–01 and (B) 2001–02; [176179]

(45) what the average number of *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks employed in the (i) Flag Officer Training and Recruitment, (ii) Naval Secretary and (iii) HQ management group was in financial year 2001–02; [176177]

(46) what the average number of *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks employed in the (i) Naval Training and Recruiting Agency, (ii) Naval Manning Agency, (iii) HQ, and (iv) Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff management group was in financial year 2000–01; [176174]

(47) what the average number of *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks employed in the (i) 1 (UK) Armoured Division, (ii) 2nd Division, (iii) 3rd Division, (iv) 4th Division, (v) 5th Division, (vi) Training and Theatre Troupes, (vii) Joint Helicopter Command, (viii) UK Support Command (Germany) and (ix) Land Support management group was in financial year 2001–02; [176183]

(48) what the average number of *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks employed by the Major Customers Research Budget was in financial year (i) 1999–2000 and (ii) 2000–01; [176190]

(49) what the average number of *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks employed in the (i) Chief of Defence Intelligence, (ii) Defence Intelligence and Security Centre, (iii) Surgeon General, (iv) Defence Secondary Care Agency, (v) Defence Dental Agency, (vi) Medical Supplies Agency, (vii) Defence Medical Training Organisation and (viii) Central Banking and Fund Management group was in financial year 2000–01; [176195]

(50) how many full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians were employed on average in the (i) DG Support Army HQ, (ii) Defence Storage and Distribution Agency, (iii) Defence Postal and Courier Service, (iv) Defence Transport and Movements Agency, (v) Deputy Chief Defence Logistics, (vi) Army Base Repair Organisation and (vii) DG Defence Logistics Command Information Systems management group in financial year 2001–02; [176199]

(51) how many *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks were employed in the (i) Army Personnel Centre, (ii) Queen Victoria School, (iii) Duke of York Royal Military School, (iv) Army Training and Recruiting Agency, (v) Service Children's Education, (vi) Army Programmes, (vii) General Staff, (viii) Chief of Staff and (ix) Royal Military College Shirvenham management group in financial year 1999–2000; [176213]

(52) how many full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians were employed on average in the (i) Naval Training and Recruiting Agency, (ii) Naval Manning Agency, (iii) HQ, (iv) Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff and (v) Fleet Accommodation Centres management group in financial year 1999–2000; [176212]

(53) what the average number of full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians employed in the (i) Flag Officer Naval Aviation, (ii) Fleet HQ, (iii) Flag Officer Surface Flotilla, (iv) Flag Officer Submarines, (v) Commandant General Royal Marines, (vi) Commodore Royal Fleet Auxiliary and (vii) non-disaggregated funds management group was in financial year 1999–2000; [176193]

(54) what the average number of full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians employed in the (i) 1 Group, (ii) 11/18 Group, (iii) 38 Group, (iv) Directly Administered Units, (v) Chief of Staff and (vi) Works and Land management group was in financial year 1999–2000; [176187]

(55) what the average number of full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians employed by the General Officer Commanding Northern Ireland top level budget-holder was in financial year (i) 1999–2000, (ii) 2000–01 and (iii) 2001–02; [176182]

(56) what the average number of full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians employed in the (i) Naval Training and Recruiting Agency, (ii) Naval Manning Agency, (iii) HQ, and (iv) Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff management group was in financial year 2000–01; [176175]

(57) what the average number of full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians employed in the Chief of Staff management group was in the financial year 2000–01; [176162]

(58) how many *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks were employed on average in the (i) DG Equipment Support (Land), (ii) Director Land Service Ammunition, (iii) Defence Clothing and Textiles Agency, (iv) Warship Support Agency, (v) DG Equipment Support (Air), (vi) Defence Communication Services Agency and (vii) Defence Fuels Group management groups in financial year 2001–02; [176151]

(59) how many full time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians were employed on average in the (i) British Forces Cyprus, (ii) Permanent Joint Headquarters, (iii) British Forces Falkland Islands, (iv) British Forces Gibraltar and (v) Sovereign Base Areas Administration management groups in financial year 2000–01; [176142]

(60) what the average number of *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks employed in the (i) Chief of Defence Intelligence, (ii) Defence Intelligence and Security Centre, (iii) Surgeon General, (iv) Defence Secondary Care Agency, (v) Defence Dental Agency, (vi) Medical Supplies Agency, (vii) Defence Medical Training Organisation, (viii) Central Banking and Fund Management, (ix) DG Information and Communication Service and (x) Defence Communication Services management groups was in financial year 1999–2000; [176145]

(61) how many full time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians were employed on average in (i) Internal Costs and (ii) Programme Account management groups in financial year 2000–01; [176140]

(62) how many *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks were employed on average in the (i) Defence Export Services Organisation, (ii) Chief Constable MOD Police, (iii) Chief Scientific Adviser, (iv) Defence Estates Organisation, (v) Policy Director, (vi) Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Equipment Capability), (vii) Civilian Management, (viii) Pay and Personnel Agency and (ix) Director General Information management groups in financial year 2000–01; [176132]

(63) what the average number of full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians employed in the (i) British Forces Cyprus, (ii) Permanent Joint Headquarters, (iii) British Forces Falkland Islands, (iv) British Forces Gibraltar and (v) Sovereign Base Areas Administration management group was in financial year 1999–2000; [176170]

(64) how many *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks were employed on average in the (i) DG Support Army HQ, (ii) Defence Storage and Distribution Agency, (iii) Defence Postal and Courier Service, (iv) Defence Transport and Movements Agency, (v) Deputy Chief Defence Logistics, (vi) Army Base Repair Organisation and (vii) DG Defence Logistics Command Information Systems management group in financial year 2001–02; [176198]

(65) how many full-time equivalent *(a)* industrial and *(b)* non-industrial civilians were employed on average in the (i) Internal Costs and (ii) Programme Account management groups in financial year 2001–02. [176148]

Mr. Caplin: The available information on numbers of military and civilian personnel analysed by budgetary grouping and by Defence Agency is contained in tables 2.2, 2.3 and 2.7 of United Kingdom Defence Statistics 1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002 copies of which are available in the Library of the House. Further details could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Disposal Services Agency

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many people were employed by the Disposal Services Agency in each of the last three years; what the staff costs were in each of those years; and what the forecast cost is for each of the next two years. [176429]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to page 39 of the Disposal Services Agency (DSA)'s Annual report and accounts 2002–03. For the financial year 2003–2004 the average number of staff employed was 80, and the personnel costs approximately £3 million subject to audit.

Forecast staff costs for 2004–05 are £3.1 million and for 2005–06, £2.7 million. The reduction in salaries being due to the cessation of the "Al Hussein Project" in 2005. The figures do not include personnel due to be transferred into DSA from the Defence Logistics Organisation as from 1 April 2005. These are due to be finalised over the coming months.

Eurofighter Typhoon

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) when he expects the Typhoon to enter service with the RAF; [176472]

(2) if he will make a statement on progress on the Typhoon programme. [176473]

Mr. Ingram: Typhoon achieved "type acceptance" in June 2003, triggering the entry to service process. The first RAF aircraft was accepted off contract in December 2003, and to date, six have been delivered. Release to Service, allowing flying under normal RAF procedures, was achieved earlier this month. The aircraft are now engaged in the process of pilot training and operational evaluation to enable Typhoon to be deployed operationally during the second half of the decade. The next step in the procurement process will be the order for the second Tranche of aircraft, and negotiations are in progress.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on problems experienced with the Typhoon's software programmes; whether he expects the software problems to delay the Typhoon's entry into service with the RAF; and what estimate he has made of the cost of correcting the problems. [176475]

Mr. Ingram: Typhoon, in common with other technologically advanced projects worldwide, has experienced some problems attributable to software development. However, the aircraft has already entered service with the RAF and we do not expect software

problems to delay its operational employment date. We would expect costs associated with correcting problems of this nature to be covered within the existing contract prices as part of the performance warranty.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of *(a)* the Typhoon's capability as a single seat fighter in all conditions and in all combat roles and *(b)* the need for a second crew member for certain operations. [176478]

Mr. Ingram: Typhoon, as with all new military aircraft, is undergoing a rigorous and incremental series of testing and evaluations to expand gradually its flight parameters to bring it up to an operational capability for front line service. Typhoon is performing extremely well at this stage of the development programme as it moves towards achievement of its full, single seat, Multi Role capability.

Export and Market Access Forum

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make it his policy to establish a defence export and market access forum. [177401]

Mr. Ingram: The Government's Defence Industrial Policy, launched in October 2002, recommended the setting up of a forum to address export promotion issues and improved access for United Kingdom industry into key foreign markets. The Defence Export and Market Access Forum is chaired by the Head of Defence Export Services and the first meeting was held on 12 March 2003.

Farnborough Air Show

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what support his Department is giving to the organisers of the Farnborough Air Show taking place from 19 to 25 July; and whether this includes assistance to enable overseas visitors to attend. [177499]

Mr. Ingram: In accordance with the Government's policy of supporting defence exports, the Ministry of Defence undertakes a broad range of activities in support of The Society of British Aerospace Companies which organises the Farnborough International Air Show. The Defence Export Services Organisation provides marketing support to the United Kingdom exhibitors and helps the organisers ensure maximum exposure of UK products to potential customers by supporting official inward visits.

Faslane

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether it is mandatory for submariners and radiation workers to use the IPM7 radiation monitor when they leave the nuclear submarines at HM Naval Base, Clyde Faslane; and if he will make a statement. [176800]

Mr. Ingram: Personnel exiting submarine reactor compartments must be monitored (by suitably qualified and experienced workers) using hand-held instrumentation capable of detecting very low levels of radioactive contamination. In addition, after leaving submarines, all staff have the opportunity to use a walk-through monitor similar to the IPM 7. This secondary monitoring normally takes place after the worker has completed primary monitoring and removed his protective clothing. The purpose of this equipment is to provide reassurance to personnel leaving controlled areas, and is compulsory where contamination is suspected or found on exiting the Reactor Compartment.

Iraq

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the countries which have troops stationed in Iraq; and how many troops are deployed in each case. [175580]

Mr. Ingram: Exact numbers of forces deployed by each nation in Iraq varies daily. The table gives current, rounded, numbers.

	Number
Albania	70
Australia	400
Azerbaijan	150
Bulgaria	450
Canada	2
Czech Republic	100
Denmark	400
El Salvador	400
Estonia	30
Georgia	150
Honduras	350
Hungary	300
Italy	2,500
Japan	550
Kazakhstan	30
Korea	500
Latvia	100
Lithuania	100
Macedonia	30
Moldova	1
Mongolia	150
Netherlands	1,200
New Zealand	50
Norway	150
Philippines	50
Poland	2,500
Portugal	100
Romania	750
Slovakia	100
Spain	950
Thailand	450
Turkey	20
Ukraine	1,500
United Kingdom	9,500
United States	130,000

Joint Combat Aircraft

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what percentage of the total projected budget of the Future Joint Combat Aircraft was spent prior to main gate approval. [176355]

Mr. Ingram: £144 million was spent on the pre Main Gate Assessment phase of the Joint Combat Aircraft programme. This equates to 6 per cent. of the approved procurement cost to date. This figure excludes expenditure by the United States on the Joint Strike Fighter.

Joint Strike Fighter

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what talks have taken place with BAE Systems about the Joint Strike Fighter's ability to operate from aircraft carriers. [174993]

Mr. Ingram: We keep in close touch with the industry teams (which include BAE Systems) involved in the United Kingdom future aircraft carrier and Joint Strike Fighter programmes. An integral element of the discussion is the interface between the ship and the aircraft.

Legacy Wrecks

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the letter of the Under-Secretary of State D/05 of S/IC 1295/04/A of 5 April, what his policy is on UK legacy wrecks and related issues of liability; what assessment he has made of their potential to pollute; and if he will make a statement. [177882]

Mr. Caplin: Our policy on UK military legacy wrecks and related issues of liability remains as set out in my letter of 5 April. At present, the Ministry of Defence is consulting with other Government Departments, including the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, as to the most appropriate means of resolving the legal principle in international law of the ownership of wrecks. We do not expect to resolve the international position on ownership for some time because of the differing views taken by various states, although we hope to have a preliminary view by late autumn.

In respect of pollution, the wrecks database at the UK Hydrographic Office contains some 60,000 records of wrecks worldwide, of which approximately 20,000 are named vessels. If a wreck is below 200 metres, and so is not likely to be a danger to shipping, it is recorded but not charted. Within the Western Hemisphere there are 422 records of UK military legacy wrecks, only 275 of which are charted, and in the Eastern Hemisphere there are 501 records with 295 charted. No assessment has been made of the potential of each of these vessels to pollute. However, as I said to my hon. Friend in my letter of 5 April, the Ministry of Defence will continue to address individual cases of potential pollution hazards from UK military wrecks on their own merits and take whatever action we deem necessary.

Lynx Replacement

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects the assessment phase for the Lynx replacement to be completed; and when he expects to make a decision on the future of this programme. [177595]

Mr. Ingram: The assessment phase of the Battlefield Light Utility Helicopter and Surface Combatant Maritime Rotorcraft is currently scheduled to complete later this year.

The decision on the future of these programmes is most likely to be made early in 2005.

Military Support Vehicle

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects to announce his decision on the preferred bidder for the military support vehicle contract. [177440]

Mr. Ingram: The preferred bidder for the support vehicle project will be announced as soon as possible.

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the potential for compatibility of equipment and co-operation between UK forces and US allies in the field when considering the supply of future strategic and tactical military support vehicles. [177460]

Mr. Ingram: Interoperability between our armed forces and those of our NATO allies has been considered as part of the evaluation of bidders' proposals for the support vehicle project.

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what investigations he has undertaken in considering his decision on preferred bidder status for the UK military support vehicle contract into the performance of medium tactical vehicles already in use with the US Army; and which company's products achieved the highest level of in-service operational readiness during Operation Iraqi Freedom. [177461]

Mr. Ingram: As part of the competition for the support vehicle project, bidders had the opportunity to state their previous experience of supplying wheeled military vehicles to other Governments and to provide evidence of the performance of such vehicles. This material has informed the evaluation process.

We are aware that vehicles manufactured by Oshkosh and Stewart and Stevenson, two of the four bidders for the support vehicle contract, were used by the US Army and Marine Corps in Operation Iraqi Freedom. However, none of the vehicles used were the variants offered by those companies and an analysis of the type suggested would be inappropriate in the context of the current competition.

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the importance of supplier experience and track record in his consideration of preferred bidder status for the military support vehicle contract. [177464]

Mr. Ingram: Consideration of these matters has informed the evaluation of bidders' proposals for the support vehicle project.

Mine Disposal

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for (1) what reasons he is holding an international competition for a Mine Disposal System; [176775]

(2) what *(a)* research and *(b)* evaluation his Department has carried out on the Archerfish to decide whether it meets the requirements of the Royal Navy for its Mine Disposal System. [176776]

Mr. Ingram: The requirement for the new single shot Mine Disposal System is subject to international competition in accordance with the Department's

Industrial Policy, which will ensure that the most effective system to meet the requirement is obtained, while obtaining value for money for the taxpayer.

Four proposals have been received from industry, including one for the Archerfish system, and criteria, including operational effectiveness, through life support, safety and commercial aspects are being considered as part of the research and evaluation process. Following initial marking of the proposals, artificial trials in a water tank will be carried out on each system. Those that are successful will then undergo final explosive trials and ship based evaluations before a final decision is made.

Missile Defence Interceptor Missiles

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials have had with the US Administration concerning the deployment of missile defence interceptor missiles in the UK. [176837]

Mr. Hoon: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Nottingham, South (Alan Simpson) on 25 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1616W.

Nuclear Safety

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department received copies of a nuclear safety report by John Connor in *(a)* June and *(b)* November 2002; and what evaluation has been made of its contents. [170228]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 6 May 2004]:* In 1998 Mr. Connor submitted a report which was, effectively, a summary of correspondence that had taken place between him and the Ministry of Defence during the previous 20 months.

In 1999 he submitted an update which, after review, was found to be substantially the same and Mr. Connor was informed that nothing could be added to the MOD's previous exchanges with him. Mr. Connor submitted further updates in November 2000 and June 2002. Again, these did not include any new issues and, as Mr. Connor was aware from previous correspondence that the MOD would not engage further with him unless new issues of substance were raised, a response was not warranted.

Parliamentary Questions

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will furnish a substantive reply to question reference 170228 tabled by the hon. Member for New Forest, East on 28 April 2004. [177976]

Mr. Ingram: I replied to the hon. Member today.

Premature Voluntary Retirement

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what percentage of premature voluntary retirement applications have been denied for *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks in all three services in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement; [176111]

(2) if he will list the number of *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks who (i) applied for premature voluntary retirement and (ii) had their applications accepted in each of the last three years, broken down by regiment; and if he will make a statement. [176745]

Mr. Caplin: Data on applications for Premature Voluntary Release (PVR) are published quarterly in the DASA Armed Forces Personnel Statistics publication Tri Service Publication, TSP 5. Copies of the latest publication (1 April 2004 figures) along with back issues are available in the Library of the House. Published data include officers and other ranks and show applications and actual exits for each of the three services, split by gender. The main difference between the number of applications for PVR and the number of actual exits shown in TSP 5 is due to individual applicants choosing to withdraw their applications whilst serving their notice, not due to applications being refused. PVR rates broken down by regiment are not held centrally and could not be provided without incurring disproportionate costs.

It is not possible to provide the information requested on those requests for PVR that have been denied as all such information is not held centrally and again could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Generally, denials are possible but are very rare and a deferral of the proposed leaving date is the more usual course of action.

Service Personnel Deaths

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the outcome was of the investigation into the deaths of *(a)* Sapper Luke Allsopp and *(b)* Staff Sergeant Simon Cullingworth; whether Her Majesty's Government received a response to it from the families of the men; and if he will make a statement. [173317]

Mr. Ingram: The investigation into the deaths of Staff Sergeant Cullingworth and Sapper Allsopp is continuing, and it would be inappropriate to speculate about its outcome. The families of both Servicemen have been regularly updated as to the progress of the investigation.

Signing Off

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks signed off in each of the three services in each of the last three years; of those, how many were tasked to Iraq after signing off; and if he will make a statement. [176802]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 8 June 2004]:* The term 'signed off' is not recognised within the UK armed forces.

Stockholdings Databases

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the fields of the three services stockholdings databases. [176359]

Mr. Ingram: I am placing the information requested in the Library of the House.

UN Operations

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 2 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 792W, on Operation Telic, when each request was filed; whether it was approved; when the equipment arrived in theatre; and if he will make a statement. [160228]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 15 March 2004]:* It is not possible to provide the information requested without explaining in detail the full range of Urgent Operational Requirements considered for operations in Iraq. The full list of such UORs is operationally sensitive and I am therefore withholding it under Exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many cluster bomb-related injuries have been recorded in the British sector of occupied Iraq for each month since the official end of the conflict. [170456]

Mr. Ingram: We have no viable means of recording the information requested. We do not hold any information in respect of injured persons not treated by UK forces and even for those treated by UK forces it is frequently not possible to identify the cause of shrapnel injuries.

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Iraqis he estimates have been arrested by mistake since the start of the conflict. [173454]

Mr. Hoon: When British forces apprehend people suspected of having committed a criminal offence, they are immediately handed over to the Iraq Police Service who arrest, and if appropriate, conduct a prosecution under Iraqi law. We do not hold central records of the outcome of such cases and cannot therefore estimate how many have been prosecuted or the results of such cases. In any event, the fact that an arrest does not ultimately lead to a successful prosecution does not mean that the arrest was either mistaken or unlawful.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether US intelligence contractors have had access to prisoners under UK jurisdiction. [175097]

Mr. Ingram: No.

Unmanned Air Vehicles

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what arrangements are in place to ensure the safe operation of United States military unmanned air vehicles while in UK airspace; whether there have been breaches of these arrangements in the past 12 months; and if he will make a statement. [174542]

Mr. Ingram: Requests from the US to operate military unmanned air vehicles in UK airspace are handled on a case-by-case basis. To date, there has only been one such request for overflight of UK airspace, which was approved. Stringent procedures are in place to ensure safe operation of such flights. There have been no breaches of these arrangements.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Food Advertising

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what recent discussions she has had on food advertising during children's programmes; and if she will make a statement. [176409]

Tessa Jowell: I have had a wide variety of discussions on food advertising during children's programmes, particularly in the light of current concerns about the possible impact of broadcast advertising on childhood obesity. This has included discussions at a range of meetings and events with Ministers, MPs, representatives of the food and drink, advertising and broadcasting industries, industry regulators, and consumer groups.

In December, I asked Ofcom to review the current code regulating broadcast advertising to children, and they will report their findings to me in July. Government policy on this issue will be announced in the autumn as part of the Public Health White Paper.

Golden Jubilee

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport which organisations were included in the Golden Jubilee medal distribution; and on what date their inclusion was announced. [177664]

Mr. Caborn: The medal was issued to serving members of the Armed Forces and Royal Fleet Auxiliary and to the "999" emergency services. Eligibility is restricted to those who completed a minimum of five years' reckonable service on 6 February 2002—the 50th anniversary of the Queen's Accession. This was announced on 4 December 2001.

The announcement to extend the award to holders of the Victoria Cross and the George Cross was made on 29 April 2003.

Libraries (Bootle)

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money has been spent on the digitisation of content in libraries in Bootle since 1997. [177712]

Estelle Morris: This information is not held centrally.

The New Opportunities Fund £50 million Digitisation of Learning Materials Programme has delivered 150 projects across the UK to enable resources which support learning of all kinds held in libraries as well as museums, archives and other public-sector institutions, to be made available online through the People's Network and the National Grid for Learning. This initiative has created a body of material containing over 2 million images, tens of thousands of sound and video clips and documents and over 1,000 learning packages. All projects can be accessed via the EnrichUK portal at http://www.enrichuk.net.

Information on grants awarded to individual local authorities and their expenditure can be obtained from the relevant authority.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 14 June 2004

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Air Quality

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to monitor the prevalence of particulate matter below 2.5 microns as part of her Department's air quality strategy. [176896]

Alun Michael: As part of the Air Quality Strategy review, Defra will be considering the most appropriate approach for monitoring PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$.

Defra keeps under review $PM_{2.5}$ monitoring and the need for possible improvements. The Air Quality Expert Group is due to publish a draft report for comment this summer on particulate matter in the UK. This will include an assessment of PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ levels in the UK and recommendations concerning monitoring. The Air Quality Expert Group report will also feed into the review of the Air Quality Strategy.

In addition, there are developments in Europe under Clean Air For Europe on particulate matter which will also feed into the review of the Air Quality Strategy. These include a reconsideration of the number of $PM_{2.5}$ monitoring sites in each member state.

Community Transport Fund

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the criteria are against which bids for the Community Transport Fund are assessed. [160104]

Alun Michael: Bids for the Rural Transport Partnership Scheme which is run by the Countryside Agency on behalf of Defra are assessed against the following criteria:

1. Community and partner support

That the application has a wide measure of local support.

That the application will cater primarily for the needs of rural areas or rural residents and integrate these with the needs of visitors.

2. Transport needs

That the project will meet an identified transport need. This will be assessed by examination of the evidence of need provided in the proposal, the scale and nature of research and consultation undertaken, the Countryside Agency Officer's existing knowledge of the area and their consultation with representatives of key organisations working there.

The project will not be to the detriment of other rural services and will not compete significantly with other transport services or facilities.

The project is unlikely to proceed without assistance from the Rural Transport Partnership.

3. Financial viability

That the application represents best value for money.

The value for money of the proposal in terms of its unit costs and in terms of the additionality obtained by the local transport network in return for the investment requested, or any other relevant factors.

(For project applications) that it is likely to be socially, environmentally or financially viable by the time the funding from the Countryside Agency ceases. Ideally, all projects should seek to break even by at least the end of the funding period, although it is often found that during the early years of operation there is a deficit, i.e. receipts do not cover costs. For non-profit making schemes, with costs often provided on an ongoing basis in kind, from fund-raising or from grants, commercial viability is not so important.

However, it should be possible to establish evidence of the economic or social benefits of such schemes over time and it is expected that this will be used to justify continued funding.

The proportion of the total capital and revenue costs requested from the Countryside Agency (grant rate) and the leverage on other funds obtained from this.

That there is a firm funding commitment from other funding bodies.

4. Strategic considerations

How well the application fits the overall aim of the RTP scheme.

The aims and objectives of the proposal and how these link with those of Defra and the Countryside Agency. Bids are particularly encouraged for projects that meet vital villages, market towns and wider welcome programme objectives. As a guide the following groups denote whether a project will be classified as a vital village, market towns or wider welcome project.

Vital Villages—transport projects which meet a locally identified transport need, or relate to the provision of access to locally provided services. Particularly favoured projects are those which address issues of social exclusion.

Market Towns—transport projects which enhance the role of an area as a service hub. Particularly favoured projects are these which have a close relationship to prioritised market towns and the health check process.

Wider Welcome—transport projects related to recreation and tourism with a rural destination. Particularly favoured projects are those with an emphasis on sustainable development, or links to other Countryside Agency interests and initiatives.

The degree to which the proposal relates to regional and local policy.

The implications of not providing funding support for the proposal.

5. Technical viability

The expected benefits of the proposal.

The competence of the applicant (and fund holder, if different) to implement, manage and administer the proposal.

How the proposal will be implemented and its development strategy.

The arrangements made for monitoring and evaluation.

6. Additional criteria

In April 2003 an additional criterion was added:

Should target areas suffering from deprivation.

Air Routes

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the *(a)* routes and *(b)* airlines which operate each route on which it is permitted for dogs and cats to travel in the passenger cabin. [175548]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 26 May 2004]:* Guide and hearing dogs only may be transported in the cabin under the Pet Travel Scheme on the following routes and airlines:

Cyprus

Larnaca to London Gatwick: Britannia Airways

Paphos to London Gatwick: Britannia Airways

France

Paris (Charles de Gaulle) to London Heathrow: BMI British Midland

Germany

Frankfurt to London Heathrow: Lufthansa

Malta

Valletta to London Gatwick: Britannia Airways

Netherlands

Amsterdam (Schiphol) to London Heathrow: BMI British Midland

Portugal

Faro to London Gatwick: Britannia Airways

Spain

Alicante to London Gatwick: Britannia Airways

Almeria to London Gatwick: Britannia Airways

Arrecife to London Gatwick: Britannia Airways

Fuerteventura to London Gatwick: Britannia Airways

Las Palmas to London Gatwick: Britannia Airways

Madrid to London Heathrow: BMI British Midland

Malaga to London Gatwick: Britannia Airways

Palma, Majorca to London Gatwick: Britannia Airways

Palma, Majorca to London Heathrow: BMI British Midland

Tenerife South, Canary Islands to London Gatwick: Britannia Airways

No route is approved to carry cats in the cabin at present.

Asbestos

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether conformity with the provisions of the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002 is *(a)* included and *(b)* to be included in the cross-compliance requirements of the Mid-Term Common Agricultural Policy Review. [176646]

Alun Michael: The Carcinogens Directive, partly implemented in the UK by the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002, is not included in the final list of 19 Directives/requirements which form the list of Statutory Management Requirements (SMR) for cross compliance.

The Carcinogens Directive was included in the original list of 38 possible SMRs. The UK supported the retention of Health and Safety Directives in cross compliance but as a result of the negotiations the European Commission reduced the list and the Health and Safety Directives, including the Carcinogens Directive, were removed. The Commission will undertake a review of cross compliance requirements in 2007.

Cattle Passports

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much taxpayers' money was spent by the British Cattle Movement Service replacing sets of labels for cattle passports. [177197]

Alun Michael: The exercise referred to will lead to a net saving of £73,000 over the next two years. In April 2004, the British Cattle Movement Service (BCMS) issued new sets of labels printed with farm details to all cattle keepers to replace labels they already had, some of which were issued five years ago. This exercise cost £67,000 and the BCMS estimate that it will save £140,000 over the next two years by reducing the verification and error correction costs arising because faded ink on the old label could not be read properly by their scanning system. The exercise was part of a continuing drive to improve quality and reduce costs.

Ceramics Industry

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she is expecting to make appropriate information available to enable the UK ceramics industry to decide whether to opt in or out of Phase I of the European Emissions Trading Scheme. [177451]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* The EU Emissions Trading Scheme provides for member states to apply for temporary exclusion from the first phase of the scheme for installations covered by national measures, provided that they satisfy the equivalence criteria set out in the Directive.

The ceramics industry is currently covered by a Climate Change Agreement and therefore operators within this sector may potentially apply for temporary exclusion. We have approached the European Commission to ask for their views on an application for temporary exclusion for Climate Change Agreement holders. We are continuing to work with the ceramics industry and others, to settle outstanding issues regarding the EU Emissions Trading Scheme.

Correspondence

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) when she expects to reply to the letter to her of 17 February from the hon. Member for West Worcestershire; [165133]

(2) when the hon. Member for West Worcestershire will receive a response to his letter of 30 March, reference 196782. [174750]

Alun Michael: My noble Friend, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (The Lord Whitty), responded to the hon. Member's letter of 17 February on Biofuels on 27 February. I responded to the hon. Member's letter of 17 February on the live export of horses and ponies on 2 April and to the letter of 30 March on the Single Farm Payments Scheme on 8 June.

EC Water Framework Directive

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of surface waters will be covered by the Environment Agency's river basin characterisation report under the EC Water Framework Directive *(a)* within the Ribble catchment and *(b)* in England and Wales. [176918]

Mr. Morley: The Agency has taken a river catchment approach to characterisation and risk assessment. All river catchments have been assessed in England and Wales, including the River Ribble. This included 433 lakes, all groundwaters in aquifers and all coastal waters and estuaries.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to refine the Environment Agency's river basin characterisation report under the EC Water Framework Directive to ensure that it includes representative samples of small water bodies in each catchment. [176919]

Mr. Morley: The Agency will follow the guidance on small waters provided by the UK Technical Advisory Group on Water Framework Directive in refining the characterisation work on small water bodies. This refinement will happen progressively during the river basin planning process from January 2005.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) whether mechanisms to ensure full integration between land use planning and river basin management planning under the EC Water Framework Directive will be piloted in the Ribble; [176920]

(2) how she will ensure that land use planning is sufficiently integrated with river basin management planning under the EC Water Framework Directive; and how conflicts will be resolved if the two statutory plans are at odds with each other. [176921]

Mr. Morley: Defra and the Environment Agency are currently working with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Local Government Association on the relationship between land use planning and river basin management planning, including how conflicts between the two statutory plans could arise and how such conflicts might be avoided or resolved. EC Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (usually referred to as the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive) will be an important vehicle for integration in this context.

As part of this work the Environment Agency proposes to look at a number of case studies to help understand how the systems will interrelate: these may include the Ribble.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what mechanisms the Environment Agency has established to make use of data on the water environment held by non-governmental organisations as part of its characterisation and risk assessment process under the EC Water Framework Directive. [176922]

Mr. Morley: The draft outputs of initial characterisation will be published in September 2004 for public review. External stakeholders, including non-governmental organisations, will be invited at that point to propose data for use in future refinement and validation of the characterisation work which will take place from 2004 onwards.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her Department plans to consult on the Environment Agency's river basin characterisation report under the EC Water Framework Directive; and what discussions she has had with the Scottish Executive about its consultation process on the Scottish Environment Protection Agency's characterisation report. [176923]

Mr. Morley: The risk assessment outputs from the Environment Agency's river basin characterisation process will be available for public review from September 2004. There will not be a formal consultation on this issue.

Defra has been in discussion with the Environment Agency, the Scottish Executive and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency with respect to the river basin characterisation report and the consultation process. The Scottish Executive and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency have decided to undertake a formal consultation, beginning in July 2004.

Energy Efficiency

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the outturn budget was that she and her predecessors supplied to fund the Energy Saving Trust in each year from 1997–98 to 2004–05, expressed in April 2004 money. [173464]

Mr. Morley: Defra outturn budgets (rounded to the nearest £ million) for the Energy Saving Trust in each year were converted to 2004–05 money using HM Treasury GDP Deflator.

	£ million
1998–99	22
1999–2000	26
2000–01	25
2001–02	26
2002–03	25
2003–04	25

Figures for 1997–98 cannot be immediately provided. I will write to Mr. Baker as soon as this information is available. The EST's outturn for 2004–05 will not be known until after the end of the current financial year, but they have been offered Defra grant funding of about £24 million.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what funds she supplied for the Warm Front programme in 2001–02, expressed in April 2004 money; and what the budget for the Warm Front programme is for 2004–05. [173466]

Mr. Morley: The Warm Front budget in 2001–2 was £152 million. Due to a carry over of £45 million from 2000–01, the final budget was £97 million.

In 2004, the £152 million would equate to approximately £164 million and the £197 million to £214 million.

Funding for the current financial year for fuel poverty will be around £166 million.

Energy Efficiency (Stoke)

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many homes in Stoke-on-Trent, North have benefited from the Home Energy Efficiency/Warm Front Scheme. [177637]

Mr. Morley: The Home Energy Efficiency Scheme is now marketed as Warm Front. Between the launch of the scheme in June 2000 and the end of March 2004, approximately 3,300 households in Stoke-on-Trent, North received assistance from the scheme.

Farm Subsidies

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many and what proportion of farm holdings in *(a)* England, *(b)* Wales, *(c)* Scotland and *(d)* Ireland are in (i) the moorland area of severely disadvantaged areas (SDA), (ii) the remainder of SDA and (iii) the rest of the country for the purposes of eligibility for single farm payments. [172461]

Alun Michael: The information requested is not currently available as entitlements to subsidy will be allocated on the basis of claims made by farmers in 2005. However, the latest information currently available for England is based on Integrated Administration and Control System Scheme applications in 2003, the figures are as follows:

(i) Number and proportion of applications who have the majority of land within the moorland line within the Severely Disadvantaged Area equals 1,210 holdings, 1.81 per cent. of total number of holdings;

(ii) Number and proportion of applications who have the majority of land within the Severely Disadvantaged Area equals 7,216 holdings, 10.79 per cent. of total number of holdings;

(iii) Number and proportion of applications that have the majority of land outside the Severely Disadvantaged Area equals 58,427 holdings, 87.40 per cent. of total number of holdings.

It should be emphasised that the criteria used here is where the majority of the applicant's land falls within one of the three categories. The procedures for the allocation to regions have still to be finalised.

The information for other countries within the UK is a matter for their devolved assemblies.

Fuel Poverty (Gas Supplies)

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate the Government have made of the effect of an extension of the mains gas network to areas of England without such provision on the extent of fuel poverty; and if she will make a statement. [178048]

Mr. Timms: I have been asked to reply.

The Department estimates that, based on figures for 2001, around 450,000 vulnerable, fuel poor households lacked access to mains gas, and that around 180,000 of those households might feasibly be connected to the mains gas network. The Department has been considering the possibility of funding for a programme to provide connection to deprived communities without mains gas. The Design and Demonstration Unit, which is based in DTI and designs and develops projects in support of White Paper objectives, has completed two pathfinder projects to provide gas connections to deprived communities, and is currently working on a third. It hopes to undertake more projects during 2004–05.

Global Food Production

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effect on global food production of global warming. [177414]

Mr. Morley: The Department funded an assessment of the impact of global warming on global food production using scenarios developed by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to characterise a range of possible global development pathways over the 21st century. A report was published in the journal "Global Environmental Change" in April 2004.

The work showed that the development scenario leading to the greatest increase in global temperature resulted in the greatest decreases both regionally and globally in crop yields. The world appears to be able to continue to feed itself under these scenarios during the rest of this century, but only through production in developed countries compensating for declines projected mainly in developing nations. Regional differences in crop production are likely to grow stronger over time, with substantial increases in prices and risk of hunger among the poorer nations.

There is considerable complexity in the world food supply system, and the impact of socio-economic developments could also be substantial, with the potential at the regional level to both increase or decrease yields.

Copies of the journal issue containing the report have been placed in both Libraries.

GM Crops

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether, for future growings of Chardon LL to take place in the

UK, *(a)* farmers and *(b)* Bayer CropScience will be obliged to replicate not only herbicide use but also the herbicide concentrations, management practices and other parameters following the farm scale GM maize trials. [164975]

Mr. Morley: Chardon LL is a variety of GM maize carrying the GM event T25 from Bayer CropScience. In March the company announced that it was not proceeding with commercialisation of this variety in Europe, so it will not be grown in the UK.

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the variations are in the conditions to the Part C consent for Chardon LL, which she has submitted for consideration by the French competent authority. [164976]

Mr. Morley: Chardon LL is a variety of GM maize carrying the GM event T25 from Bayer CropScience, which was granted a consent in 1998 under part C of Directive 90/220 by the relevant French competent authority on behalf of all EU member states.

On 9 March 2004, officials wrote to the French Competent Authority seeking amendments to this consent to limit herbicide use with the crop in line with advice from the Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment. A copy of the letter to the French Competent Authority has been published on the Defra website and placed on the GM public register.

Official Vehicles

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of official vehicles used by her Department are run on *(a)* petrol, *(b)* diesel, *(c)* liquid petroleum gas and *(d)* compressed natural gas. [172779]

Alun Michael: The percentage breakdown of official vehicles used by Defra at 1 April 2003 was: *(a)* petrol—5 per cent., *(b)* diesel—92 per cent., *(c)* liquid petroleum gas—3 per cent., and *(d)* compressed natural gas—0 per cent. Data are currently being collected on the situation at 1 April 2004. They will be placed in the Library of the House when they are available. Recent developments include use of electric vehicles, for instance.

Pollutant Particles

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action she has taken to improve the detection of the pollutant particles found in the $PM_{2.5}$ range. [176924]

Alun Michael: Defra has monitored particles found in the $PM_{2.5}$ range at seven locations in England since 1998. Results are available on Defra's air quality website: www.airquality.co.uk There are also a number of additional $PM_{2.5}$ monitors in England funded by other organisations such as local authorities, the Highways Agency and electricity supply companies.

The Department keeps under review $PM_{2.5}$ monitoring and the need for possible improvements. The Air Quality Expert Group is due to publish a draft report for comment this summer on particulate matter in the UK. This will include an assessment of PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ levels in the UK and recommendations concerning monitoring.

Pollution

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the estimated levels of *(a)* emissions and *(b)* removals were for (i) hydrofluorocarbons, (ii) perfluorocarbons and (iii) sulphurhexafluoride in each year from 1990 to 2002, expressed in (A) unit tonnes and (B) thousand tonne carbon dioxide equivalents. [176931]

Mr. Morley: The following tables show the estimated emissions for these gases in (A) tonnes and (B) thousand tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent, as published in the latest UK Greenhouse gas inventory, released in April 2004. There are no removals of these gases estimated in the UK inventory.

(A) Emissions of HFCs, PFCs, SF6 in tonnes

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
HFC	973.9	1,022.8	1,064.0	1,231.0	1,588.5	2,155.3
PFC	204.0	170.0	81.8	68.7	67.5	63.4
SF6	45.3	47.3	49.2	51.0	51.7	54.0

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
HFC	2,762.9	3,644.9	4,233.7	3,822.8	4,128.6	4,646.9	5,267.6
PFC	68.3	61.1	60.1	60.2	73.5	60.2	52.5
SF6	55.2	53.4	54.9	61.6	77.5	61.0	66.7

(B) Emissions of HFCs, PFCs, SF6 in thousand tonne carbon dioxide equivalent

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
HFC	11,375.4	11,854.0	12,323.5	12,999.9	14,009.7	15,490.9
PFC	1,393.7	1,164.2	570.7	485.2	481.2	457.4
SF6	1,081.9	1,130.4	1,176.2	1,219.2	1,235.0	1,291.3

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
HFC	16,720.1	19,181.4	17,268.0	10,829.9	9,081.3	9,727.5	10,418.3
PFC	496.3	450.1	441.1	446.3	541.4	437.5	383.5
SF6	1,318.6	1,275.1	1,311.8	1,472.3	1,852.1	1,457.5	1,594.0

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what steps her Department has taken to measure the leakage of *(a)* hydrofluorocarbons, *(b)* perfluorocarbons and *(c)* sulphurhexafluoride from appliances in the UK; [176932]

(2) if the Department will take steps to improve the *(a)* quality and *(b)* quantity of independent monitoring of the leakage of hydrofluorocarbons. [176990]

Mr. Morley: Defra commissioned a study from AEA Technology as independent contractors to estimate annual UK emissions of hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons and sulphur hexafluoride. The final report was published in July 2003. The report estimated emissions from a range of appliances that contain these chemicals. Leakage rates were estimated drawing on information obtained through consultation with UK industry and NGOs and leakage rates published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

The report represents the best possible estimates of hydrofluorocarbons that could be made at that time. My Department will continue to keep under review the scope for obtaining better estimates and the timing of any such work.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps have been taken to improve the containment of fluorinated gases; what funding has been made available for such containment in each year since 1997; what reduction there has been in the leakage of these gases as a result of these steps; and how the effects of these steps have been *(a)* assessed and *(b)* recorded. [176991]

Mr. Morley: Reductions in emissions of fluorinated gases have to date largely been driven by technological development and voluntary action by industry. Based on best estimates, total UK emissions fell from 17,240 kt CO_2 equivalent in 1995 to about 11,475 kt CO_2 in 2000. Emissions are expected to increase again to about 13,242 kt equivalent by 2005 and then steadily decrease to about 10,369 kt CO_2 in 2025.

The proposed EC Regulation on fluorinated gases will introduce EU wide controls on certain uses of fluorinated gases, as well as provisions relating to containment and recovery.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the progress made by her Department in reducing the leakage of hydrofluorocarbons from refrigerators. [176992]

Mr. Morley: Based on information in a study commissioned by Defra and published in 2003, the percentage of new domestic refrigerators using hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) is expected to decrease to 10 per cent. by 2005 and to 5 per cent. by 2010, following a switch to hydrocarbon based refrigerants. HFCs in refrigerators are recovered for destruction under existing arrangements for disposing of waste fridges.

The proposed EC Regulation on fluorinated gases will introduce EU wide provisions relating to leakage testing of commercial scale stationary refrigeration equipment. Subject to a text being finalised, further measures will address the need to repair detected leakage as soon as possible. Other provisions will require training and certification programmes to be established for those servicing refrigerators and for records to be kept. The Government believe that these provisions will provide a valuable framework for addressing HFC leakages in the commercial refrigeration sector.

Water

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether all sites of special scientific interest within the Ribble area will be included in the Environment Agency's characterisation and risk assessment process under the EC Water Framework Directive. [176914]

Mr. Morley: If the SSSIs are water bodies or contain water bodies then they will be included in the characterisation and risk assessment process.

Water Supplies (Aldershot)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent research she has commissioned into the adequacy of water supplies in the Aldershot area to serve releases of Ministry of Defence land for residential purposes. [176777]

Mr. Morley: Aldershot is served by South East Water. Along with the other water supply companies, South East Water produces a water resources plan, which looks forward 25 years. The plan is updated annually by the company, and is reviewed by the Environment Agency for consistency with the national and regional water resources strategies. Any planned residential developments in the area will be factored into this process.

World Environment Day

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how *(a)* she, *(b)* her Department and *(c)* agencies for which her Department is responsible will be marking World Environment Day on 5 June; and if she will make a statement. [175103]

Mr. Morley: Defra and colleague Departments worked together with the Environment Agency on a campaign to mark World Environment Day. This included asking members of the public to sign "the Pledge to the Future" to identify ways they can improve their local environment, and a publicity campaign by the Environment Agency on how businesses can make their organisations more sustainable.

Defra Ministers also participated in the launch of London Environmental Week to mark World Environment Day.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Concessionary Television Licences

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on preserved rights to concessionary television licences for people in sheltered and community housing. [178693]

Estelle Morris: Preserved rights for existing beneficiaries of the Accommodation for Residential Care concessionary television licence, in cases where their accommodation ceases to meet the existing qualifying criteria but continues to be provided or managed by a local authority, a housing association or a development corporation, were introduced in April 2003.

Digital Radio

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans she has in conjunction with Ofcom to facilitate transition to digital radio broadcasting. [178051]

Estelle Morris: Section 67 of the Broadcasting Act 1996 requires the Secretary of State to keep under review the development of digital radio for the purposes of considering how long it would be appropriate for sound broadcasting services to be provided in analogue form. As required by the Act, she has asked Ofcom and the BBC to provide reports by 31 October which look at the current position and future prospects for: the provision of radio multiplex services; the availability of digital sound programme services and existing analogue services in digital form; and the ownership or possession of equipment capable of receiving digital sound services. A number of other industry bodies have also been asked to submit any comments they wish to make.

Libraries

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what impact the People's Network project has had on library visits; and if she will make a statement. [178223]

Estelle Morris: The People's Network has linked all but a handful of the UK's public libraries to the internet. Recent figures published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy show that visits to UK public libraries increased by nearly 5 million, over the previous year, to 323 million in 2002–03 (before provision of the People's Network had been completed). Alongside other activities that are attracting more users, such as dedicated reader development work, the introduction of the People's Network is already making major contribution to the increase in visits. Research suggests that many positive impacts are being felt in communities across the country: people are learning new basic skills, finding community information which would not otherwise be provided, and finding jobs.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money was spent on library *(a)* buildings and *(b)* books in (i) Merseyside and (ii) Crosby in each year since 1996. [177862]

Estelle Morris: Information on Merseyside's and Sefton borough council's expenditure on *(a)* buildings and *(b)* books is contained in the two tables. These figures are derived from the most recent information available in the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy annual public libraries statistics, copies of which are held in the House of Commons Library.

We are not able to provide a breakdown of expenditure for Crosby, as figures are not broken down beyond the level of individual library authorities, but we have included the figures for Sefton Library Authority, which encompasses Crosby.

Expenditure on library premises

£

	Merseyside	*Sefton*
1996–97	2,656,851	325,333
1997–98	2,859,199	335,990
1998–99	3,056,140	343,513
1999–2000	[1]2,596,443	343,706
2000–01	2,869,567	306,555
2001–02	3,326,071	341,015

Expenditure on books

£

	Merseyside	*Sefton*
1996–97	[2]3,147,541	[2]539,131
1997–98	2,035,712	508,464
1998–99	2,409,468	510,092
1999–2000	[1]2,077,856	507,239
2000–01	2,930,521	799,048
2001–02	2,651,235	516,475

[1] Figures for Knowsley Library Authority are not included in the 1999–2000 figures for Merseyside.

[2] Figures for 1996–97 incorporate expenditure on a wider range of products and services defined as "book purchasing" than in subsequent years when this definition was refined.

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money has been spent on the digitisation of content in libraries in the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale since 1997. [178531]

Estelle Morris: This information is not held centrally.

The New Opportunities Fund £50 million Digitisation of Learning Materials Programme has delivered 150 projects across the UK to enable resources which support learning of all kinds held in libraries as well as museums, archives and other public-sector institutions, to be made available online through the People's Network and the National Grid for Learning. This initiative has created a body of material containing over 2 million images, tens of thousands of sound and video clips and documents and over 1,000 learning packages. All projects can be accessed via the EnrichUK portal at http://www.enrichuk.net.

Information on grants awarded to individual local authorities and their expenditure can be obtained from the relevant authority.

PRIME MINISTER

Butler Inquiry

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister when he expects to receive the report of the Butler Inquiry. [178717]

The Prime Minister: I have asked the Review to report before the summer recess.

Departmental Staff

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Prime Minister what the total amount paid by his Office to employment agencies for the supply of temporary staff was in financial year 2003–04. [178910]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 4 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1094W.

G8 Summit

Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister what matters in respect of *(a)* sustainable development, *(b)* climate change and *(c)* nuclear non-proliferation, were

discussed at the G8 summit in Sea Island, Georgia; and if he will place in the Library papers circulated at the summit in respect of these matters. [178729]

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the statement I gave to the House on the G8 summit today.

India

Keith Vaz: To ask the Prime Minister what contact he has had with the new Prime Minister of India; and if he will make a statement. [178771]

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Coventry, South (Mr. Cunningham) on 24 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1365W.

Iraq

Clare Short: To ask the Prime Minister whether the interim Iraqi authority will have the power to demand the withdrawal of UK troops at whatever time they might wish. [177087]

The Prime Minister: On 30 June, full sovereignty will be handed over to the Interim Iraqi Government and the Multinational Force will remain with the consent of that Government.

UN Security Council Resolution 1546, passed unanimously on 8 June, makes clear that the Multinational Force mandate will be terminated if so requested by the Government of Iraq.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Prime Minister whether the Iraq Survey Group has investigated the accuracy of the Iraq Government's disclosure in December 2002 in response to UNSC Resolution 1441; and whether its final report will include an account of these investigations. [178889]

The Prime Minister: The Iraq Survey Group is examining information from a wide range of sources, including the declaration made by Iraq in December 2002. The work of the Iraq Survey Group is ongoing and a final report has yet to be produced.

Meetings (Minutes)

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister if he will make it his policy to establish civil service-wide guidance on which meetings involving Ministers and civil servants should be minuted. [178345]

The Prime Minister: The Cabinet Office is currently updating existing guidance on private office records. The revised guidance will be issued to all Departments shortly, and will be placed on the Cabinet Office and The National Archives websites.

Regulation

Mr. Norman: To ask the Prime Minister what meetings of the Panel for Regulatory Accountability *(a)* he has attended since March and *(b)* he is scheduled to attend in the next 12 months. [178837]

The Prime Minister: I have regular meetings and discussions with ministerial colleagues and others on a wide range of subjects, including on regulation and will continue to do so. As with previous Administrations it is not my practice to provide details of all such meetings under exemption 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Royal Bounty and Charity Funds

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Prime Minister (1) what reserves are in the *(a)* Royal Bounty Fund and *(b)* Royal Charity Fund; [177657]

(2) what disbursements have been made from the *(a)* Royal Bounty Fund and *(b)* Royal Charity Fund since 1997; and who the recipients were. [177658]

The Prime Minister: As at 31 December 2003, the assets of the Royal Bounty and Special Services Fund were £191,500, and the assets of the Royal Charity Fund were £1,400.

Since 1 January 1997 payments of £201,300 have been made from the Royal Bounty and Special Services Fund, and £4,450 from the Royal Charity Fund.

In accordance with exemption 12 of Part 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information, details of recipients are exempt from disclosure in order to protect the privacy of the individuals concerned.

Weapons of Mass Destruction

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister when he expects the Iraq Survey Group to complete its search for weapons of mass destruction. [178250]

The Prime Minister: The work of the Iraq Survey Group is ongoing.

Yemen

Keith Vaz: To ask the Prime Minister when he plans to meet the President of Yemen. [178783]

The Prime Minister: I met the President of Yemen with other G8 leaders at the recent G8 summit on Sea Island to discuss reform in the Middle East.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Strangers Bar

Mr. Purchase: To ask the Chairman of the Catering Committee if he will make a statement on the change in arrangements relating to the locking of the door between Strangers Bar and the Terrace; and what assessment he has made of the implications of the new arrangements for *(a)* convenience of access for hon. Members and *(b)* emergency evacuation in the event of a fire. [176395]

Mr. Dennis Turner: As one of a number of measures to enhance security in the House of Commons, the Speaker instructed the Serjeant at Arms to lock the door between Strangers' Bar and the Terrace. A quick release lock is being fitted to the door as a matter of urgency; meanwhile, I understand that the Fire Safety Manager is content with the temporary arrangements in place for emergency evacuation in the event of a fire. Hon. Members may get to the Terrace by the entrance next to the Cafeteria.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Portcullis House

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission how many full-scale evacuations of Portcullis House have been held since the building was opened; and on what dates and at what times. [177201]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The number of fire evacuations of Portcullis House is 31. The dates and times are as follows:

Date	*Time*
5 October 2000	15:03
13 October 2000	11:08
13 October 2000	21:46
7 December 2000	16:48
7 April 2001	14:14
1 June 2001	06:51
6 August 2001	15:01
22 October 2001	08:07
26 October 2001	12:27
4 December 2001	10:20
20 March 2002	22:22
November April 2002	06:39
13 April 2002	03:08
22 October 2002	15:13
28 October 2002	19:22
2 November 2002	10:35
23 November 2002	16:59
5 December 2002	20:24
16 December 2002	09:36
19 February 2003	11:50
27 March 2003	08:38
6 May 2003	11:44
14 July 2003	20:00
19 December 2003	10:30
09 January 2004	18:25
20 January 2004	22:36
7 February 2004	09:47
9 February 2004	16:49
3 March 2004	13:51
21 March 2004	13:17
1 April 2004	05:19

During the early months of occupation of Portcullis House a large number of evacuations were due to over-sensitive sensors.

The number of unnecessary alarms and evacuations have been reduced; so far in 2004, evacuations have been for genuine, if minor, incidents.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Archaeological Objects

Mr. Allan: To ask the Solicitor-General what action she intends to take following the decision not to proceed with the case against Mr. Robert Duqueria for the alleged removal of objects from the scheduled site of Cunetio in Wiltshire; and if she will issue new guidance on prosecutions for such removals to the Crown Prosecution Service. [172211]

The Solicitor-General: I have already received and considered a detailed report from CPS Wiltshire concerning the case against Mr. Robert Duqueria who was charged with removing 25 Roman coins and three artefacts from a protected site following a police investigation including obtaining expert evidence. The CPS subsequently received a defence expert report which cast reasonable doubt on the evidence that the coins came from a protected site as opposed to a nearby site where permission may have been granted in any event.

Prosecutions of this nature are relatively rare and may well demand appropriate expert evidence depending on the facts of the individual case. In this case all possible avenues were pursued and the case was correctly reviewed in accordance with the Code for Crown Prosecutors.

I am, therefore, satisfied that there is no need to take any further action in this case.

In addition, there is no basis for concluding that the outcome of this particular case would have been affected by the availability of further guidance for prosecutions for such removals. The issues were clear and the case was dealt with correctly. Nevertheless, in view of its importance, I have asked the CPS to consider developing guidance on the subject as part of its electronic Legal Guidance.

Crown Prosecution Service

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Solicitor-General how many trained specialists there are in Merseyside Crown Prosecution Service dealing with victims of *(a)* domestic violence, *(b)* rape and *(c)* child abuse. [170339]

The Solicitor-General: All prosecutors in CPS Merseyside deal with domestic violence cases. Last year a compulsory refresher course was run, following the introduction of the new CPS policy on these cases. The training was delivered to 60 Crown prosecutors and to police officers with help from Sefton Women and Children's Aid. It focused on raising the awareness of the needs of the victim and the role of Women's Aid, as well as on the legal aspects of dealing with these cases.

Like all CPS areas, Merseyside has a domestic violence co-ordinator, who is part of a national network which shares and disseminates policy and good practice across the CPS. In addition, each branch within CPS Merseyside has a branch co-ordinator whose responsibilities include liaison with local agencies and to assist in securing a consistency of approach across the area.

All 22 prosecutors permanently assigned to the Crown court branch are rape specialists. Compulsory training for all prosecutors (including those in other branches) in sexual offences has just commenced.

20 prosecutors are trained to deal with child abuse cases. Most of these are based in the Crown court branch, which deals with the vast majority of these cases.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Solicitor-General how many Crown Prosecutors have been recruited in each Crown Prosecution Service in each financial year since 1 May

1997 for which figures are available, broken down by grade. [167304]

The Solicitor-General: The structure of the Crown Prosecution Service changed in 1999, following the implementation of the review conducted by Sir Iain Glidewell.

Consequently, the summary table at Annexe A only shows the number of Crown prosecutors that were recruited in each of the 42 current CPS Areas in each of the financial years since 1 May 1999, broken down by grade. Comparable figures for 1 May 1997 and 1 May 1998 are not available.

Annexe A: Table showing the number of Crown Prosecutors recruited in each CPS area since 1 May 1999

	1999–2000	2000–01	Total 2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	Grand total
Derbyshire	2	—	4	3	5	14
Leicestershire	1	—	5	9	4	19
Lincoln	1	—	2	4	3	10
Northamptonshire	2	1	3	2	—	8
Nottinghamshire	3	1	7	13	11	35
Bedfordshire	—	—	5	1	1	7
Cambridgeshire	1	1	1	6	2	11
Essex	1	1	5	5	3	15
Hertfordshire	2	1	—	7	3	13
Norfolk	—	—	2	2	3	7
Suffolk	—	—	1	5	1	7
London	13	7	85	71	39	215
Staffordshire	—	—	5	—	6	11
Warwickshire	—	—	1	—	2	3
West Mercia	—	—	—	3	5	8
West Midlands	9	14	12	21	9	65
Cleveland	1	—	4	7	1	13
Durham	3	—	3	3	1	10
Northumbria	2	—	7	9	12	30
Cheshire	1	2	5	6	4	18
Cumbria	—	—	1	2	1	4
Greater Manchester	4	1	23	12	14	54
Lancashire	—	—	8	—	13	21
Merseyside	2	—	6	8	9	25
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	—	—	12	2	9	23
Kent	2	—	6	9	3	20
Surrey	2	1	5	3	2	13
Sussex	3	3	8	5	5	24
Thames Valley	1	5	6	13	11	36
Avon and Somerset	1	6	9	4	8	28
Devon and Cornwall	—	1	2	6	3	12
Dorset	1	—	1	1	3	6
Gloucestershire	—	—	2	—	3	5
Wiltshire	—	1	1	5	2	9
Dyfed-Powys	—	1	2	—	—	3
Gwent	—	1	7	3	—	11
North Wales	—	—	1	—	3	4
South Wales	4	1	9	3	8	25
Humberside	1	1	1	3	5	11
North Yorkshire	—	—	—	2	3	5
South Yorkshire	3	1	4	6	10	24
West Yorkshire	2	1	11	14	18	46
Total	68	52	282	278	248	928

Departmental Procurement

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Solicitor-General what percentage of the *(a)* crockery, *(b)* cutlery and *(c)* glassware procured by her Department over the last five years is of British manufacture. [170813]

The Solicitor-General: In respect of the Treasury Solicitor's Department, it estimates, on the basis of checking existing stock and liaison with current suppliers, that *(a)* 100 per cent. of crockery, *(b)* 0 per cent. of cutlery and *(c)* 10 per cent. of glassware purchased by the Department was of British manufacture.

HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate has not purchased any such items since its establishment on 1 October 2000.

The Crown Prosecution Service and the Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers procure very small quantities of crockery, cutlery and glass. Separate records of the source of these products are not kept.

Family Law

Mr. Byers: To ask the Solicitor-General what plans she has to issue a Green Paper on the reform of family law; and if she will make a statement. [178079]

Mr. Lammy: I have been asked to reply.

The Government plans to publish a consultation document on parental relationship breakdown. This will set out proposals for improving outcomes for children and the experiences of all those involved in

parental separation, through improved services, help and support. Any legislative implications of these proposals will be addressed in the document.

Lenient Sentencing

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Solicitor-General how many cases from each court where the sentence was judged to be unduly lenient were referred for review in each of the last three years. [168820]

The Solicitor-General: The tables show the numbers of cases received by the Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers and the numbers of cases referred to the Court of Appeal in 2001, 2002 and 2003.

2001

Crown court	*Cases received by LSLO*	*Cases referred to court of appeal*
Aylesbury	1	0
Basildon	1	0
Birmingham	7	3
Blackfriars	6	3
Bolton	2	2
Bournemouth	1	0
Bradford	2	1
Bristol	11	8
Burnley	1	0
Caernarfon	1	0
Canterbury	3	3
Cardiff	1	1
Carlisle	2	1
Central Criminal	14	3
Chelmsford	0	—
Chester	5	4
Chichester	2	1
Croydon	1	1
Derby	2	1
Doncaster	1	1
Durham	3	0
Exeter	3	2
Gloucester	5	3
Grimsby	2	0
Guildford	4	3
Harrow	0	—
Hove	0	—
Hull	1	0
Inner London	2	2
Ipswich	2	2
Isleworth	1	1
Kingston	2	0
Kingston upon Hull	0	—
Knutsford	1	1
Leeds	7	3
Leicester	3	2
Lewes	4	2
Lincoln	1	0
Liverpool	7	3
Luton	6	5
Maidstone	7	4
Manchester	14	11
Middlesex Guildhall	0	—
Mold	1	1
Newcastle	5	3
Newport	1	1
Northampton	1	1
Norwich	1	1
Nottingham	4	1
Oxford	2	0
Peterborough	1	1
Plymouth	0	—
Portsmouth	4	4
Preston	8	3
Reading	5	4
Salford	0	—
Sheffield	5	3
Shrewsbury	1	1
Snaresbrook	5	4
Southampton	1	0
Southwark	2	1
Stafford	1	1
St. Albans	2	—
Stockport	0	—
Stoke on Trent	1	0
Swansea	2	1
Swindon	1	1
Taunton	1	0
Teesside	5	3
Truro	0	—
Warrington	0	—
Warwick	2	2
Winchester	6	4
Wolverhampton	3	2
Wood Green	3	2
Woolwich	1	1
Worcester	5	3
York	3	0

2002

Crown court	*Cases received by LSLO*	*Cases referred to court of appeal*
Aylesbury	0	—
Basildon	2	2
Birmingham	7	2
Blackfriars	4	1
Bolton	3	0
Bournemouth	2	0
Bradford	0	—
Bristol	15	6
Burnley	3	1
Caernarfon	0	—
Canterbury	4	2
Cardiff	3	1
Carlisle	6	2
Central Criminal	10	4
Chelmsford	0	—
Chester	2	1
Chichester	2	1
Coventry	1	0
Croydon	1	1
Derby	6	4
Doncaster	0	—
Dorchester	1	1
Durham	1	0
Exeter	3	0
Gloucester	1	1
Grimsby	2	2
Guildford	2	2
Harrow	5	5
Hove	0	—
Hull	3	1
Inner London	2	0
Ipswich	1	0
Isleworth	0	—
Kingston	2	0
Kingston upon Hull	0	—
Knutsford	0	—
Leeds	6	2
Leicester	4	3

2002

Crown court	Cases received by LSLO	Cases referred to court of appeal
Lewes	6	3
Lincoln	2	0
Liverpool	3	1
Luton	2	2
Maidstone	4	4
Manchester	20	10
Middlesex Guildhall	0	—
Mold	1	1
Newcastle	9	2
Newport	0	—
Northampton	3	2
Norwich	7	3
Nottingham	8	4
Oxford	9	3
Peterborough	0	1
Plymouth	3	2
Portsmouth	3	1
Preston	9	3
Reading	8	5
Salford	0	—
Sheffield	3	1
Shrewsbury	1	—
Snaresbrook	5	3
Southampton	3	1
Southend	1	1
Southwark	1	0
Stafford	1	1
St. Albans	2	0
Stockport	0	—
Stoke on Trent	0	—
Swansea	1	0
Swindon	3	2
Taunton	5	2
Teesside	7	2
Truro	2	1
Warrington	0	—
Warwick	1	0
Whitehaven	1	0
Winchester	6	1
Wolverhampton	5	2
Wood Green	0	—
Woolwich	2	2
Worcester	3	1
York	0	—

2003

Crown court	Cases received by LSLO	Cases referred to court of appeal
Aylesbury	4	2
Basildon	1	0
Birmingham	5	2
Blackfriars	3	1
Bolton	10	0
Bournemouth	1	0
Bradford	2	1
Bristol	22	10
Burnley	1	0
Caernarfon	0	—
Cambridge	1	0
Canterbury	3	0
Cardiff	3	2
Carlisle	4	1
Central Criminal	6	3
Chelmsford	1	0
Chester	1	1
Chichester	0	—
Coventry	0	—

2003

Crown court	Cases received by LSLO	Cases referred to court of appeal
Croydon	1	0
Derby	2	1
Doncaster	2	2
Dorchester	—	—
Durham	0	—
Exeter	1	0
Gloucester	3	3
Grimsby	3	1
Guildford	3	2
Harrow	1	0
Hove	1	0
Hull	2	0
Humberside	1	0
Inner London	6	4
Ipswich	0	—
Isleworth	1	0
Kingston	7	4
Kingston upon Hull	1	1
Knutsford	0	—
Leeds	3	2
Leicester	3	2
Lewes	2	0
Lincoln	0	—
Liverpool	7	4
Luton	1	0
Maidstone	7	5
Manchester	24	3
Middlesex Guildhall	2	1
Mold	0	—
Newcastle	3	1
Newport	1	0
Northampton	1	1
Norwich	3	2
Nottingham	3	1
Oxford	2	0
Peterborough	1	1
Plymouth	2	0
Portsmouth	1	0
Preston	1	0
Reading	10	3
Salford	1	0
Salisbury	1	0
Sheffield	2	0
Shrewsbury	2	0
Snaresbrook	2	2
Southampton	3	0
Southend	0	—
Southwark	2	2
Stafford	0	—
St. Albans	0	—
Stockport	1	0
Stoke on Trent	1	0
Swansea	2	1
Swindon	1	0
Taunton	2	1
Teesside	7	3
Truro	1	1
Warrington	1	1
Warwick	1	0
Whitehaven	0	—
Winchester	9	4
Wolverhampton	4	0
Wood Green	3	2
Woolwich	2	0
Worcester	1	0
York	1	1

TREASURY

Construction Industry Scheme

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many Construction Industry Scheme certificates have been lost in each year since the Scheme's introduction; and what their total value is. [178016]

Dawn Primarolo: The number of tax certificates reported to the Revenue as lost in each year since the introduction of the scheme is set out as follows. The certificates themselves have no value, they simply allow the holder to receive payments without deduction.

	Number
1999–2000	1,523
2000–01	1,597
2001–02	1,238
2002–03	1,507
2003–04	1,042

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the estimated total annual cost to the Inland Revenue is of running the Construction Industry Scheme. [178017]

Dawn Primarolo: The estimated annual cost to the Inland Revenue of running the Construction Industry Scheme is £27 million, as set out in the Regulatory Impact Assessment on the Reform of the Construction Industry Scheme published at the time of Budget 2004.

Employment

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of adults aged 25 to 49 years are in employment in the UK; and what the comparable figures are for other EU countries. [177910]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. David Willetts, dated 14 June 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about employment in the UK and other EU countries for 25–49 year olds. I am replying in his absence. (177910)

The attached table gives the latest available figures for each EU member state.

The UK figure refers to December 2003-February 2004 and is taken from the latest UK Labour Force Survey. The other figures are the latest available European LFS data taken from Eurostat's New Cronos database. The figures are not seasonally adjusted.

Employment rate for 25–49 year olds for the UK and EU

Country	*Latest reference period available*	*Employment rate*
Austria	April-June 2003	85.5
Belgium	October-December 2003	79.4
Cyprus	April-June 2003	83.3
Czech Republic	October-December 2003	81.3
Denmark	October-December 2003	84.2
Estonia	October-December 2003	79.7
Finland	October-December 2003	81.6
France	October-December 2003	79.9
Germany	April-June 2003	78.8
Greece	October-December 2003	73.9
Hungary	October-December 2003	75.5
Ireland	October-December 2003	77.7
Italy	October-December 2003	71.9
Spain	October-December 2003	73.3
Latvia	October-December 2003	78.9
Lithuania	October-December 2003	79.4
Luxembourg	January-March 2003	77.6
Malta	October-December 2003	63.7
Netherlands	October-December 2003	83.5
Poland	October-December 2003	70.5
Portugal	October-December 2003	82.5
Slovak Republic	October-December 2003	76.6
Slovenia	October-December 2003	85.4
Sweden	October-December 2003	83.2
United Kingdom	December 2003-February 2004	81.2

Endowment Mortgages (Mis-selling)

Hywel Williams: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what guidance has been provided to those making claims of mis-selling of endowment mortgages against small independent financial advisers about the information to be included in a claim. [178224]

Ruth Kelly: Information for policyholders is available from both the Financial Services Authority and the Financial Ombudsman Service to help people who want to make a complaint about an endowment mortgage. The FSA factsheet "Endowment mortgage complaints" has been produced and distributed since October 2000 and has been regularly updated. The FSA also produces a more detailed guide to making a complaint which includes an example of how to write a complaint letter. Where a policyholder is not satisfied with the outcome of a complaint they can refer the matter to the Financial Ombudsman Service who can provide further assistance to policyholders in writing or over the phone.

Gas Network (Treasury Support)

Alan Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations have been made to his Department by Government Departments and other agencies and individuals seeking Treasury support to fund extension of the mains gas network to areas of England without such provision. [178047]

Ruth Kelly: The DTI has committed, in the Energy White Paper, to explore options for pilot projects on gas network extension.

The Treasury has spoken to a range of Departments, organisations and individuals on this issue.

Illegal Food Imports

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what quantity of illegal food imports were seized in each month of the last three years. [177960]

John Healey: HM Customs and Excise reported in their spring departmental report 2004 (Cm 6224) that they seized 119,278 kg of illegal imports of products of animal origin for the period 1 April to 31 December 2003.

The following table shows the monthly breakdown for these seizures:

Month	Total weight of products of animal origin seized (kg)
April	3,281
May	25,111
June	5,517
July	9,106
August	20,238
September	14,109
October	11,768
November	13,474
December	16,674
Total	119,278

Note:
All figures are rounded to the nearest kilogramme.

Statistics relating to seizures of illegal imports for the 2001–02 and 2002–03 financial years were published in Defra's "Annual Review of Imports of Animal Product: April 2002—March 2003", a copy of which is available in the Library of the House.

A monthly breakdown of the statistics for those years, and for seizures made by other agencies between 1 April and 31 December 2003, would be available only at disproportionate cost; Exemption 9 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information applies.

Large Business Office

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the estimated tax yields from the Inland Revenue Large Business Office were for each year from 1997; and what the actual tax yield outcome was in each year. [174945]

Dawn Primarolo: The Large Business Office was only formed in 1997 so there was no basis to make a forecast until 1998–99. The forecast was included in the board's report.

An overall forecast for 1999–2000 for the Department was made but the make up of this figure is not available. For subsequent years no forecast of compliance yield was made.

The additional tax yield figures from the LBO for 1999–2000 to 2002–03 as adjusted are set out in the board's reports which are available in the House of Commons Library.

Those for 2003–04 are being audited for inclusion in the report for 2003–04 which will be published later this year.

Overseas Aid

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his answer of 27 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 869W, on overseas aid, if he will list *(a)* countries which contribute a higher percentage than the UK of gross national income to overseas aid and *(b)* those countries which have set a timetable to reach the UN target of 0.7 per cent. of gross national income on overseas aid. [177723]

John Healey: The UK's ratio of overseas aid to gross national income (GNI) stood at 0.34 per cent. in 2003 and is set to rise to 0.40 per cent. in 2005–06, the highest level since 1981.

Information on countries contributing higher percentages than the UK to overseas aid and those with timetables to reach 0.70 oda/GNI is available on the OECD Development Assistance Committee website at www.oecd.org/dataoecd/40/63/31508396.pdf.

Pensions

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many pension schemes approved by the Inland Revenue have fewer than 50 members. [176825]

Ruth Kelly: This information is not held centrally. However, table 2.1 of the "Occupational Pension Schemes 2000—Eleventh Survey by the Government Actuary", which covered occupational pension schemes with two or more members, indicates that between 86,000 and 98,000 pension schemes approved by the Inland Revenue might have less than 50 members.

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the cost to pension schemes with fewer than 50 members of his proposed requirement on those schemes to secure all pensions with annuities. [176826]

Ruth Kelly: The cost of annuitising pension benefits for pension schemes with less than 50 members as opposed to paying benefits directly from the scheme will vary from case to case. Relevant factors will be the level to which scheme benefits are funded and the relative ages and benefit entitlements of the scheme members.

Premium Bonds

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the minimum size of purchase of Premium Bonds since 1979 in *(a)* cash terms and *(b)* constant prices. [177904]

Ruth Kelly: The minimum purchase values for each purchase of Premium Bonds by adults for themselves since 1979 are as follows:

£

Date	Cash value	Current value[1]
January 1979	5	18
July 1985	10	20
July 1989	100	162
May 2004	100	100

[1] Adjusted to May 2004 prices using the RPI.

Sefton

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the mean household income was in Sefton in *(a)* 2000 and *(b)* 2003 as a percentage of UK mean household income; and if he will make a statement. [177916]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mrs. Claire Curtis-Thomas, dated 14 June 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question on the mean household income in Sefton. (177916)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) does not compile statistics on mean household income.

ONS has published gross disposable household income (GDHI) at current prices at the NUTS1, 2 and 3 sub-national geographies. These estimates were last published on 26 March 2002. The data for the period 1995 to 1999 are consistent with the 2001 National Accounts. Sefton is a NUTS3 area and forms part of the NUTS2 region of Merseyside, for which GDHI per head figures are available on an annual basis and are given in Table A attached.

For the smaller areas, survey sample sizes are only large enough for ONS to publish estimates of household income on a 3 year average basis. These are presented as indices for Sefton, Merseyside, and the North West relative to the UK average in Table B attached.

Table A: Gross disposable household income per year

£ per head

Area	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*
Merseyside	8,710	8,844	9,342
United Kingdom	9,513	9,696	10,142

Table B: Index[1] of gross disposable household income (GDHI) per head

Average over period 1997–99

Area	*GDHI index*
North West	93
Merseyside	92
Sefton	110

[1] Index value is 100 for the UK as a whole.

Tax Credits

Ms Walley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families are benefiting from the working tax credit in Stoke-on-Trent, North; and if he will make a statement. [177629]

Dawn Primarolo: An estimate can be derived from "Child and Working Tax Credit Statistics. Geographical analyses. January 2004", which can be found on the Inland Revenue website at www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/menu.htm. All in-work families receiving these tax credits, except those receiving child tax credit at or below the family element, were benefiting from the working tax credit. The estimates are subject to sampling uncertainty.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimates he has made of the number of Inland Revenue staff acting as appointees of applicants for tax credits. [177955]

Dawn Primarolo: This information is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

DEFENCE

Gibraltar

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Royal Navy ships have called at Gibraltar since 1 January. [161197]

Mr. Ingram: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave on 24 May 2004 *Official Report*, columns 1350–52W, to the hon. Member for Romford (Mr. Rosindell).

Alcohol Consumption (Service Personnel)

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what orders were in force concerning the consumption of alcohol *(a)* on-base and *(b)* off-base by British troops based in Baghdad during the Christmas and New Year period in 2003–04. [176334]

Mr. Ingram: In common with all overseas military deployments, orders on the consumption of alcohol would be at the discretion of the individual commanders and will vary with the operational circumstances. When alcohol is permitted, the normal limit is two cans of beer per man per day.

Apache Helicopters

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 12 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1632W, on Apache helicopters, how many AH-64 Apache helicopters have been accepted into service; how many are in storage at RAF Shawbury; when he expects the full complement to be fully operational; and if he will make a statement. [177168]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence has accepted delivery of 67 aircraft. There are at present 19 Apache in storage at RAF Shawbury, which will reduce to zero when all three Attack Helicopter Regiments are formed by late November 2006.

Army HQ (Northern Ireland)

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has for the relocation of Army Headquarters Northern Ireland from Thiepval Barracks in Lisburn to Aldergrove; and if he will make a statement. [178854]

Mr. Ingram: There are no plans for the relocation of the Headquarters Northern Ireland from Thiepval Barracks, Lisburn to Aldergrove. Lisburn is listed in the security normalisation annex of the Joint Declaration, as one of the locations where, in the context of a peaceful society, the regular garrison in Northern Ireland might be based.

Asbestos

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 15 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 44W, on asbestos, what his Department estimated the cost would be of compiling a central register of surveyed buildings occupied by departmental staff including agencies which require remedial work on asbestos or the removal of asbestos. [176798]

Mr. Caplin: For the defence estate, asbestos information is held locally at each establishment/site. It has been estimated that gathering the current data from within the Department, its agencies and trading funds (including information currently held on each establishment's asbestos register) would cost approximately £45,000.

Civilian Internees (Compensation)

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what consultations he has had with the Home Office about the status of British passport-holders who were excluded from the ex gratia compensation scheme for civilian internees of the Japanese. [177808]

Mr. Caplin: The Home Office was consulted by and subsequently represented on the interdepartmental working group chaired by the Cabinet Office when the definition of "British" was being clarified in relation to the eligibility of former civilian internees under the ex gratia payment scheme.

Databases

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the fields of the *(a)* Defence Procurement Agency Corporate Management Information Systems, *(b)* the Civilian Personnel Management Information System and *(c)* the Long Term Costings database. [176385]

Mr. Ingram: I am placing the information requested in the Library of the House.

Deepcut Barracks Inquiry

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will give details of the implementation of each of the recommendations made by Surrey police following their inquiry into the deaths at Deepcut Barracks. [177719]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to my statement in the House on 24 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1306–19.

We are increasing the level of assurance that we have in the way in which the armed forces train, and in managing the risks to which our young recruits are exposed. As a positive and substantive response to the concerns expressed by the Surrey police, we are expanding our relationship with the Adult Learning Inspectorate to provide independent oversight of all armed forces training. Any recommendations they may make and our responses to them will be exposed fully to public scrutiny.

Defence Assistance Fund

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost of the Defence Assistance Fund was for each of the last four years; and how much of those costs in each year was used to promote military exports. [176430]

Mr. Ingram: Defence Assistance Fund (DAF) expenditure was £19.9 million in 2000–01; £7.2 million in 2001–02; £9.7 million in 2002–03 and £10.4 million in 2003–04. Of this, the amount spent on supporting defence exports was £4.7 million in 2000–01; £5 million in 2001–02; £4.2 million in 2002–03 and £6 million in 2003–04. The drop in the DAF total between 2000–01 and 2001–02 reflects the transfer of funds to the Conflict Prevention Fund.

Defence Bodies

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) if he will place in the Library a copy of the balance sheet of the *(a)* Chief of Defence Logistics and *(b)* Defence Storage and Distribution Agency management group for financial year 2000–01; [176131]

(2) if he will place in the Library a copy of the balance sheet of the Chief of Defence Logistics Management Group non-disaggregated funds for financial year 1999–2000. [176153]

Mr. Ingram: I have already published the balance sheet for the Defence Storage and Distribution Agency for 2000–01 and the Chief of Defence Logistics Management Groups. I refer the hon. Member to my letter of 21 August 2003, reference: D/MIN(AF)/2185N/03/L to the hon. Member for North Essex (Mr. Jenkin). Copies are available in the Library of the House.

Defence Intelligence Budget

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the Defence Intelligence Budget was in *(a)* 1997, *(b)* 2000 and *(c)* 2004; and what budget is projected for the next three financial years. [173961]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 18 May 2004]:* There is no defence intelligence budget as such. While the Defence Intelligence Staff (DIS) operates as a discrete unit, other elements of the defence intelligence community are integral parts of a range of budgetary areas.

The DIS's budgets for 2000–01 and the current financial year (2004–05) are as follows:

Financial year	*£ million*
2000–01	[1]151.7
2004–05	[2]198.4

[1] Cash at outturn prices.
[2] "Near-cash" at 2004–05 prices.

Notes:
1. In 2000–01, the Department was still budgeted in cash terms. Under Resource Accounting and Budgeting, it is now controlled in terms of Resource and Capital Departmental Expenditure Limits (DELs).
2. "Near-cash" comprises Resource and Capital DELs, less charges for cost of capital and depreciation, and changes in provisions.

In 2000–01, the Department was controlled in cash, whereas the figure for 2004–05 reflects the move to Resource Accounting and Budgeting. The two figures are not therefore directly comparable. I will write to the hon. Member about the DIS's budget for 1997–98.

Planning assumptions about the content and timing of the defence programme in future years form part of internal advice to Ministers on the overall affordability of defence, and in some cases anticipate decisions to be taken by Ministers. I am therefore withholding budgetary information on future years under

Exemption 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. The defence budget beyond 2005–06 will be agreed in the 2004 Spending Review.

Departmental Staff

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many staff were employed in the Department to work in the communications field, and what the total expenditure on communications for the Department was, broken down by *(a)* Government Information and Communication Service staff and *(b)* other staff, broken down by (i) press officers, (ii) special advisers and (iii) others, in (A) 1994–95, (B) 1996–97, (C) 1997–98 and (D) 2001–02. [168680]

Mr. Caplin: Information for 1994–95, 1996–97 and 1997–98 is no longer available.

During the financial year 2001–02, a total of 150 military and civilian personnel were employed within the communications organisation in the Ministry of Defence Headquarters. This included 21 members of the Government Information and Communication Service (GICS). Of the remainder, eight worked in the Press Office and the others were employed on a wide range of tasks, including design, publicity, marketing, internal communications and strategic planning.

The cost of these staff for 2001- 02 was £5.3 million, of which around £0.90 million was for the members of the GICS.

The figures relate to those employed within the Ministry of Defence's Headquarters Communications department at any time during the year.

Details of staff employed in communications elsewhere in the MOD are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

There are two special advisers in the Ministry of Defence, neither of whom are members of the communications organisation. The Special Adviser's Code of Conduct sets out the sort of work a special adviser may undertake on behalf of their Minister and this includes communications activity. Details of the costs of special advisers are given on an annual basis. Information for the financial year 2003–04 will be published in due course.

Eurofighter Typhoon

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what representations he has received from QinetiQ about the Typhoon's software and computer programmes; [176474]

(2) what representations he has received from the companies involved in the Typhoon programme about that aircraft's software and computer programmes; [176476]

(3) what representations he has received from the RAF about the Typhoon's software and computer systems. [176477]

Mr. Ingram: No representations have been received about Typhoon's software and computer programmes. However, reports on all aspects of the Typhoon, including the software and computing, have been commissioned by the Ministry of Defence from both the companies involved in the programme and the Independent Assessor (QinetiQ in this case). This is the normal process for all new aircraft types entering service. It is the responsibility of MOD to take into account these reports and establish whether an aircraft meets the necessary safety requirements. Typhoon has been assessed to meet those requirements, allowing the Assistant Chief of the Air Staff to authorise the aircraft's Release to Service permitting operation under RAF safety procedures.

Firearms Rules

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what rules govern the import by army personnel of captured weapons to the UK as souvenirs; what measures are taken to enforce these rules; and how many individuals have been subject to disciplinary action for infringements in the last five years. [176026]

Mr. Ingram: All armed forces personnel are subject to the 'Import, Export and Customs Powers (Defence) Act 1939' and the 'Import of Goods (Control) Order 1954'. This legislation prohibits the importation of all goods including military operational memorabilia, firearms and cultural objects into the United Kingdom unless under the authority of a licence issued by the Department of Trade and Industry.

Service police search all equipment, vehicles and containers returning from operational theatres, and members of the RAF are provided with guidance on the search of equipment and baggage loaded onto aircraft.

Over the last five years, a total of eight service personnel have been reported by the Royal Military Police for infringements.

Iraq

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence to whom UK forces in Iraq will answer in the event of allegations of war crimes or misconduct after 30 June; and if he will make a statement. [176809]

Mr. Hoon *[holding answer 8 June 2004]:* United Kingdom forces, wherever they operate in the world, are subject to UK military law which includes criminal liability for offences committed overseas as set out in the Service Discipline Acts. This has always been the case in Iraq and will continue to apply for as long as British forces are present. As in the UK or in other operational theatres, the responsibility for enforcing the law lies with the Service police.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what information he has examined in relation to civilian deaths cause by UK forces in the city of Amara between 3 and 6 April. [177585]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence examines information from a variety of sources to keep abreast of all developments in Iraq. In the week in question, nine Iraqis were confirmed killed in Al Amara, although the total number of fatalities cannot be confirmed. The deaths occurred during attacks on 1 Light Infantry in incidents while they were on patrol and during a demonstration. Those confirmed killed were directly involved in armed attacks on United Kingdom forces.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he first made representations to his US counterpart regarding the International Committee of the Red Cross report on maltreatment of Iraqi prisoners by US forces in Iraq. [174592]

Mr. Hoon *[holding answer 20 May 2004]:* I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 24 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1353W.

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether *(a)* private contractor interrogators and *(b)* advisers on interrogation techniques of any nationality have been allowed access to (i) prisons and (ii) other places of detention under British control in Iraq. [174666]

Mr. Hoon *[holding answer 26 May 2004]:* No.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list those matters in respect of security policies implemented by Coalition forces in Iraq which are *(a)* his responsibility, *(b)* the responsibility of his United States counterpart and *(c)* matters for which responsibility is joint. [175073]

Mr. Ingram: The actions of United Kingdom forces are the responsibility of the UK. The United States is responsible for the actions of US forces. As is the case with many multinational operations the UK commander reports to the Multinational Force commander whilst remaining under British national control, through the Permanent Joint Headquarters to the Ministry of Defence. The other members of the Multinational Force have their own national chains of command.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether interrogators used by the British armed forces are permitted to make direct physical threats to those held in custody. [175066]

Mr. Ingram: No. All United Kingdom interrogators must successfully complete a stringent course prior to undertaking any operational interrogations. During the course they are specifically instructed that individuals being questioned must be treated at all times in accordance with the Geneva Conventions. Use of physical threats could amount to mental torture or coercion, both of which are banned by the Conventions.

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his latest estimate is of the number of Iraqi civilians killed in consequence of military operations carried out by British forces since the invasion of Iraq began. [171520]

Mr. Ingram: We have no reliable means of ascertaining the numbers of Iraqi civilians killed during major combat operations between 19 March and 1 May 2003.

Since 1 May the United Kingdom Units have reported all confirmed fatalities of which they are aware arising from incidents in which they were involved and we have put in place a mechanism for central collation of unit reports. However it is not always possible to confirm whether fatalities or injuries have occurred during a particular incident. For example, in some incidents we believe Iraqi dead and/or injured may have been taken away by their compatriots before UK forces could investigate. In other incidents UK forces have been forced to withdraw before any Iraqi fatalities and/or injuries could be confirmed. Consequently we have no viable means of assessing the completeness of the information.

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the number of Iraqi civilians killed *(a)* during the war, *(b)* since President Bush declared an end to hostilities and *(c)* in early April in Fallujah; and if he will make a statement. [171853]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 11 May 2004]:* We have no reliable means of ascertaining the numbers of Iraqi civilians killed during major combat operations between 19 March and 1 May 2003.

Since 1 May, United Kingdom Units have reported all confirmed fatalities of which they are aware arising from incidents in which they were involved and we have put in place a mechanism for central collation of unit reports. However it is not always possible to confirm whether fatalities or injuries have occurred during a particular incident. For example, in some incidents we believe Iraqi dead and/or injured may have been taken away by their compatriots before UK forces could investigate. In other incidents UK forces have been forced to withdraw before any Iraqi fatalities and/or injuries could be confirmed. Consequently we have no viable means of assessing the completeness of the information.

We are not in a position to comment on civilian casualties allegedly caused by other coalition partners.

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when Ministers were first informed that some prisoners in UK custody were being mistreated in Iraq. [172996]

Mr. Hoon: Ministers were informed that the Special Investigation Branch of the Royal Military Police had commenced an investigation into the alleged ill-treatment and false imprisonment of Iraqi civilians on 22 April 2003. The investigation concluded that there was no case to answer.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what specific training has been given to British servicemen and women in respect of *(a)* interviewing and *(b)* managing civilian detainees in Iraq; and if he will place a copy of the manual used in such training in the Library. [173340]

Mr. Ingram: Specialist training for personnel responsible for interviewing detainees is provided through a series of up to three courses based upon the Geneva Conventions and the Laws of Armed Conflict.

British forces personnel in Iraq have the authority to detain persons who pose a threat to their safety or security. All members of the Army therefore receive training on prisoner handling. In the case of soldiers this is during their Phase 1 training and for officers at RMA Sandhurst. This training is supplemented annually in the form of Individual Training Directives (Army) (ITD(A)). ITD(A)s are mandatory for all Army personnel and provide annual training on the law of armed conflict and include direction on prisoner handling. Those deploying on operations must also complete mandated Pre-Deployment Training (PDT)

which includes guidance on the procedures for handling prisoners. Personnel are advised that such training is equally applicable to detainees.

I shall place a copy of the relevant ITD(A) and 'A Soldier's Guide to the Law of Armed Conflict' in the Library. In respect to the other manuals used in such training, I am withholding this information in accordance with Exemption 1a of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information which relates to defence, security and international relations.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list independent observer groups which have visited United Kingdom-run prisons in Iraq holding Iraqi prisoners during the last 12 months. [174000]

Mr. Ingram: The International Committee of the Red Cross visits the United Kingdom's Divisional Temporary Detention Facility at Shaibah on a regular basis.

The House of Commons Defence Select Committee have visited the facility but did not meet any detainees.

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his oral statement of 27 May 2004, on Iraq, whether the sovereign interim Government of Iraq will be party to the consideration of disposition of forces required in Iraq until elections in 2005. [177504]

Mr. Ingram: The relationship between the Multinational Force and the sovereign Government of Iraq is described in the exchange of letters referred to in United Nations Security Council Resolution 1546, which the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary placed in the Library of the House on 7 June. As the Resolution itself makes clear, the Security Council would terminate the mandate of the Multinational Force at any time if so requested by the Government of Iraq.

Israel

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what bilateral military relations the United Kingdom has with Israel. [178587]

Mr. Ingram: Our current bilateral relationship with Israel includes maintaining professional contacts through our Defence Attaché in Tel Aviv as well as some exchanges on technology and some equipment procurement. We have formal agreements covering research and security but these are subject to certain restrictions. We also hold military talks that cover a wide range of issues.

Lance Corporal William Graham

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) on what date Lance Corporal William Graham of the 1st Battalion of the Royal Scots Regiment was released from prison; on what date he resumed military duties; and what duties he has performed since January; [175969]

(2) what factors underlay the decision to retain Lance Corporal William Graham as a member of the 1st Battalion of the Royal Scots Regiment following his conviction and imprisonment; [175970]

(3) what payments were made to Lance Corporal William Graham of the 1st Battalion of the Royal Scots Regiment between the date of his criminal conviction to the date of his release from prison; [175971]

(4) what measures were taken by the 1st Battalion of the Royal Scots Regiment to retrain Lance Corporal William Graham in the use of firearms following his release from prison; [175972]

(5) what role Lance Corporal William Graham of the 1st Battalion of the Royal Scots Regiment played in the parade of honour and other public events at *(a)* Linlithgow, *(b)* Peebles, *(c)* Haddington, *(d)* Penicuik and *(e)* elsewhere in April. [175975]

Mr. Ingram: Lance Corporal Graham was released from prison on 9 January 2004. He resumed military duties on 10 January 2004. The Queen's Regulations for the Army define the exceptional reasons which would make the retention of a soldier desirable if he has been sentenced by a civil court or by court-martial to imprisonment, detention or any other form of custodial sentence. Where there are circumstances that make retention of a soldier desirable then the case is to be submitted with valid and explicit reasons to the Director of Manning (Army) Ministry of Defence for a decision. The circumstances will vary from case to case. From the date of his criminal conviction to the date of his release from prison LCpl Graham did not receive payment.

In common with all personnel in Regular Army and TA Units, LCpl Graham must complete his personal weapon training and pass his personal weapon and weapon handling tests.

LCpl Graham did not take part in any parade in April.

I am withholding personal data relating to LCpl Graham under Exemption 12 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, unless the relevant conditions are met.

Lockheed-Martin

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with Lockheed-Martin about inward investment into the UK. [177125]

Mr. Ingram: Ministers meet regularly with Lockheed-Martin, which employs about 800 staff at over 10 sites in the UK, to discuss a range of issues of mutual interest.

Priory Hospital, Bristol

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much his Department has spent on psychiatric treatment for current and former Service personnel at the Priory Hospital at Bristol; and how many personnel have received such treatment in the last year. [178014]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 10 June 2004]:* In 2003–04, the Ministry of Defence spent £169,789.99 on treating 21 serving members of the armed forces at the Priory Hospital in Bristol. The MOD does not refer former Service personnel to the Priory Group for treatment. On leaving the Services, responsibility for their medical care falls to the NHS.

RAF Scampton

Mr. Beith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many RAF personnel are required to carry out those of RAF Boulmer's functions which are to be moved to RAF Scampton; and how many RAF personnel will be required to carry out the functions at RAF Scampton. [178221]

Mr. Ingram: Some 700 RAF personnel with civilian support, currently carry out those functions at RAF Boulmer whose relocation is being considered. A similar number would be required for the same functions were they to be located elsewhere. If they were subject to more efficient basing however, there would be economies in the number of their support personnel.

Mr. Beith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he has changed *(a)* the proposal to move No. 1 ACC from RAF Boulmer to RAF Scampton and *(b)* the timing of any planned move; and if he will make a statement. [178222]

Mr. Ingram: No decisions have been made on this issue as a final decision on the review of Air Combat Service Support Units and Minor Unit Basing has not yet been taken as consultation with the Trades Unions is still ongoing. As part of a contingency planning exercise to alleviate current accommodation problems at RAF Boulmer, staff have been considering whether it is feasible to provide an interim facility for 1 ACC elsewhere.

Remembrance Events

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent discussions *(a)* he, *(b)* his Department and *(c)* the Commonwealth War Graves Commission has had with the French authorities regarding low-level tourist overflights of British and Commonwealth military cemeteries and memorials. [178590]

Mr. Caplin: There have been no discussions between either the Ministry of Defence or the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and the French authorities about low level tourist overflights of British and Commonwealth military cemeteries and memorials in France. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission has no recollection of any representations raising concerns about such matters.

Royal Air Force (Turkmenistan)

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the collision between a RAF Hercules based at Lyneham in Wiltshire and an un-named jet aircraft over Turkmenistan on 22 May. [177035]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 8 June 2004]:* An RAF Hercules C130J aircraft was on a routine flight between Kabul and Bucharest on 22 May when there was a collision with a Turkmen aircraft which damaged one of the C130J's propellers. The C130J landed safely at Baku airport. There were no injuries to personnel on board. The RAF is conducting a Unit Inquiry. The Turkmenistan authorities have also convened a Board of Inquiry.

Shipbuilding

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Department of Trade and Industry, *(b)* shipbuilders and *(c)* trade unions to identify the minimum numbers of (i) workers and (ii) designers necessary to maintain a strategic capacity of naval shipbuilding in the United Kingdom. [175575]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* We remain committed to maintaining a strategic capacity and capability for naval shipbuilding in the United Kingdom. Ministry of Defence and Department of Trade and Industry officials and representatives from the shipbuilding industry meet on a monthly basis to discuss the future programme. These meetings are being taken forward in a positive and constructive manner. Additionally, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence met with Kevin Curran, General Secretary of the GMB on 4 May.

We are building on the solid base that the Defence Industrial Policy has established and are actively exploring practical ways of achieving its objectives. In the shipbuilding area, we are comparing our requirements against capacity and, where possible, evaluating the options to smooth out large peaks and troughs.

Special Investigations Branch

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what training is undertaken by the Special Investigations Branch of the Royal Military Police in the investigation of serious incidents; and what computer system is available to the Special Investigations Branch of the Royal Military Police to assist in the investigation of serious incidents. [176016]

Mr. Ingram: All members of the Special Investigation Branch of the Royal Military Police are required to attend and pass the Royal Military Police Special Investigation Course. Some members also attend external training courses in the investigation of serious or series crime. Senior members of the Special Investigation Branch are trained as Senior Investigating Officers and attend Home Office accredited training courses.

The Special Investigation Branch have the Home Office Large Major Enquiry System (HOLMES) Version 2 to assist in the investigation of serious incidents.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on how many occasions in the past two years members of the Royal Military Police Special Investigation Branch have been subject to military discipline; and for what offences. [176029]

Mr. Ingram: All members of the Royal Military Police Special Investigation Branch are subject to military discipline.

In the past two years, four members of the Royal Military Police Special Investigation Branch have been subject to military disciplinary action. The offences were:

Rape/Indecent Assault

Possession of Obscene Articles

Publication of Obscene Articles

Impaired Driving

Traffic Accidents in Military Transport.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what mechanisms are available to consider complaints against members of the Royal Military Police Special Investigation Branch; and how many complaints have been made in each of the past two years. [176030]

Mr. Ingram: There are various types of complaints, which may be related to either authorised policing activities or the conduct of investigations; they may be made at any stage of an investigation:

applications for Redress of Complaint are considered in accordance with the Army Act 1955 by the commanding officer of the complainant's unit;

complaints that an RMP Investigator has breached the Service Police Codes of Practice, and complaints following the completion of an RMP investigation are considered by the commanding officer of the relevant RMP unit. The Special Investigation Branch (SIB) will investigate complaints of serious malpractice or negligence;

in accordance with the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000, any complaints about the use of covert investigation techniques are matters for the Investigatory Powers Tribunal.

Since 2002, the following number of complaints have been made against members of RMP SIB for alleged professional misconduct:

	Number
2002	2
2003	2

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what body has responsibility for overseeing the operation of the Royal Military Police Special Investigation Branch; and to whom it reports. [176031]

Mr. Ingram: The Royal Military Police (RMP) Special Investigation Branch (SIB) is commanded by the Adjutant General and is under operational control of the Provost Marshal (Army). The SIB is subject to inspection in accordance with the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. The Surveillance Commissioner undertook an inspection in 2003 and made no substantive comments. The Interception Commissioner is expected to undertake an inspection later this year. In addition, all major SIB investigations are reviewed by external civilian police forces in accordance with Home Office Guidelines. No other external body has responsibility for oversight of RMP SIB operations. All reports are made to the Provost Marshal (Army).

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Afghanistan

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent estimate he has made of the number of rapes committed by members of armed factions in Afghanistan against women. [176602]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Due to the reluctance of victims to speak out and the limited capacity for monitoring and data collection in Afghanistan, the number of rapes against women committed by members of armed factions in Afghanistan remains unclear. The German NGO Medica Mondiale is piloting a scheme to provide shelters for rape victims in Afghanistan in collaboration with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions he has had with representatives of the World Food Programme about the impact on local commerce of providing free externally produced wheat to the western regions of Afghanistan. [177109]

Hilary Benn: A recent evaluation of the United Nations World Food Programme (UNWFP) activities in Afghanistan has found that there is no evidence of any significant impact of providing free externally produced wheat on the local commerce. There was a significant decrease in wheat price last year but it is believed that it was mainly due to the bumper crop that Afghanistan had after several years of drought.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what proportion of the funds allocated by his Department for reconstruction in Afghanistan in 2003–04 were disbursed. [177110]

Hilary Benn: DFID allocated £75 million for reconstruction and humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan in 2003–04, and disbursed £77.6 million, 3.5 per cent. over budget.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development who represented his Department at the international conference on reconstruction assistance to Afghanistan in Berlin on 31 March and 1 April; and what conclusions for the Department's policy have been drawn. [177113]

Hilary Benn: On 31 March senior officials from DFID represented the Department. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and officials from the FCO also attended on 31 March. I represented DFID on 1 April.

The conference emphasised the need for donors to remain focused on the needs of Afghanistan in the long term, and to continue to support the Afghan Government in their battle against narcotics and insecurity. These are all areas to which the UK Government are fully committed.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what progress has been made by provincial reconstruction teams in Afghanistan in building *(a)* police stations, *(b)* roads and *(c)* bridges. [177121]

Hilary Benn: The UK Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Mazar-e Sharif has focused on security sector reform and building local government capacity, and not on rebuilding physical infrastructure. However, DFID through the PRT has funded local and international NGOs to build some police stations and bridges. In the city of Mazar-e Sharif, one police station has been rebuilt and work is underway on two more.

Two bridges have been rebuilt in Sar-e Pol Province. DFID does not have this information for PRTs led by other nations.

Much more work is being done in these areas through other mechanisms such as the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund and bilateral development programmes. Figures published at the April Afghanistan Development Forum show that US$532.5 million had been allocated for road infrastructure this financial year and US$5.5 million for building police stations and headquarters.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what progress has been made with the development of micro-enterprises as part of the sustainable livelihoods strategy for Afghanistan. [178019]

Hilary Benn: DFID is actively supporting the Microfinance Investment Support Facility for Afghanistan. US$15 million worth of contracts have been signed with five microfinance institutions through which around 35,000 loans have been provided to the poor to start their own micro-enterprises. The number of beneficiaries is expected to increase to 75,000 by March 2005. More than 90 per cent. of beneficiaries are women.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many experts have been seconded by his Department to provincial reconstruction teams to assist development in the regions of Afghanistan; and what the results have been of their work to date. [178020]

Hilary Benn: DFID has seconded four development advisers to Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Mazar-e Sharif, Bamian, Gardez and Kandahar. This work is ongoing and has concentrated so far on security sector reform and local government capacity building. DFID will carry out a full evaluation of its engagement with PRTs in October this year.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what progress has been made in strengthening the domestic revenue base of the Afghan Transitional Administration. [178021]

Hilary Benn: DFID is supporting the Ministry of Finance in undertaking both customs and tax reform over the next three years with the aim of increasing domestic revenues.

Since July 2002, DFID has provided technical assistance in customs policy and administration. This assistance has supported the development of a five-year customs modernisation plan. The plan lays out in detail the key reform areas, time frames and costs, to achieve the ultimate goal of facilitating trade and investment in Afghanistan and maximising revenue streams. DFID is supporting the customs department to strengthen its institutional capacity to formulate and implement policy in order to achieve the objectives set out in their Five-year Plan.

DFID has also been involved in tax policy formulation and setting up the Large Taxpayers Unit. DFID is now supporting the Government's fiscal management strategies through effective revenue mobilisation and professional administration that is supported and trusted by businesses and the community in order to achieve the objectives set out in their reform plan.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the size was of the ordinary and recurrent budgets of the Afghan Transitional Administration in 2003–04; and what it is in 2004–05. [178022]

Hilary Benn: The ordinary and recurrent budget are the same thing. It was US$ 550 million for 2003–04 and is US$ 608.5 million for 2004–05.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the financial contribution was of his Department to the ordinary budget of the Afghan Transitional Administration in *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2004–05. [178023]

Hilary Benn: DFID provides financial assistance through the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), a multilateral donor trust fund, which is managed by the World Bank. The ARTF finances the Afghan Transitional Administration directly strengthening the legitimacy and accountability of the government and ensuring that resources are allocated to national priorities. It helps fund the essential recurrent budgetary expenditures required for the government to function effectively.

DFID contributed £30 million to the ARTF in 2003–04. DFID has committed £45 million for 2004–05 of which £25 million has already been disbursed.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the performance was of the Afghan Transitional Administration against its benchmarks for reform of public administration in 2003–04. [178024]

Hilary Benn: There were no benchmarks set for reform of public administration for 2003–04.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much money his Department has spent on translations into local languages in Afghanistan in each of the last two years. [178025]

Hilary Benn: In the last two years DFID have spent £11,169 on translations into local languages. This money financed the translation of a report, published last year, on Afghanistan's Constitutional and Political Development. The report was translated into Afghanistan's two main official languages, Pashto and Dari.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps have been taken by his Department to improve the collection of data on development in Afghanistan. [178026]

Hilary Benn: In May this year, the Afghan Government and donors agreed a Statistical Master Plan for Afghanistan prepared with funding from DFID, the World Bank and the Asia Development Bank. DFID is now working with partners to determine how the plan will be implemented. Last year DFID also provided the Central Statistics Office with 50 personal computers.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much has been raised in domestic revenue in each of the last two years by the Afghan Transitional Administration. [178027]

Hilary Benn: In the period from the fourth quarter of Solar Year 1380 to the end of 1382 (January 2002 to March 2004), the Afghan Transitional Administration collected US$ 349 million in domestic revenue.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many people have been employed under the National Emergency Employment Programme in Afghanistan; and what its cost has been to date. [178029]

Hilary Benn: To date some 200,000 people have been employed to undertake one month's work under the National Emergency Employment Programme in Afghanistan, and the cost of this has been around US$27.3 million.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the cost to date has been of the National Solidarity Programme in Afghanistan; and what its results have been. [178030]

Hilary Benn: The total contract value of the National Solidarity Programme is US$42,252,342.

The programme is planned to cover all 20,000 villages in Afghanistan within four years. To date, over 5 million rural women and men have participated in electing 4,000 community development councils in 4,000 villages. As of 31 March 2004, block grants valuing $4,694,629 have been disbursed to fund projects identified by these councils including roads, water supply systems, schools and facilities for weaving and tailoring.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much money has been *(a)* committed and *(b)* spent by his Department to support security and the rule of law in Afghanistan. [178031]

Hilary Benn: DFID has allocated £5 million for its work through Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), which support security and the rule of law in Afghanistan. Since July 2003, £411,000 has been spent. In addition, the joint DFID/FCO/MOD Global Conflict Prevention Pool allocated £16 million for the Afghanistan strategy in 2003–04, of which £12 million was spent, and this financial year has spent £6 million of an £18 million allocation.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much money has been *(a)* committed and *(b)* spent by his Department to support governance and public administration in Afghanistan. [178033]

Hilary Benn: A total of almost £7 million has been committed and spent on public administration reform and governance since 2002.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) how much money has been *(a)* committed and *(b)* spent by his Department in each of the last three years in Afghanistan on (i) refugee return, (ii) education and vocational training, (iii) health and nutrition, (iv) livelihood and social protection and (v) cultural heritage, media and sports; [178034]

(2) how much money has been *(a)* committed and *(b)* spent by his Department in each of the last three years in Afghanistan on (i) transport and communications, (ii) water and sanitation, (iii) energy, (iv) urban development and (v) natural resource management. [178035]

Hilary Benn: Prior to the Tokyo conference in 2002 DFID did not have fixed allocations for Afghanistan. At Tokyo DFID pledged £200 million over five years from 2002–03. Since then DFID have allocated £75million per year for Afghanistan and disbursed £75.8 million in 2002–03 and £77.6 million in 2003–04. At the Berlin Conference this year DFID increased its five-year pledge to £500 million.

The UK funds Afghanistan's development process from our humanitarian and reconstruction budgets and through contributions to the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF). The following table shows the breakdown of DFID's bilateral humanitarian and reconstruction aid and contributions to the Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund in each of the last three years in Afghanistan:

£ million

	Humanitarian assistance	*ARTF*	*Reconstruction assistance*
2001–02	46 4	—	—
2002–03	44.7	15	16.1
2003–04	8.1	30	39.5

DFID's Afghanistan programme focuses on Public Administration Reform and Economic Management, Rural Livelihoods, Political Process and Security. UK contributions to the ARTF cannot be traced to specific projects within the Afghan development budget. DFID also funds a significant number of interventions that contribute to a range of areas. It is not possible therefore to set out how much money the UK has committed and spent in the specific areas you have identified.

From our humanitarian budget DFID have given the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) £3 million in 2001–02, £6.5 million in 2002–03 and £4.5 million in 2003–04. This has helped to fund refugee camps to provide shelter and basic health and education services and also assisted refugee return. Contributions to the World Food Programme have provided food aid to the most vulnerable groups.

The reconstruction budget includes DFID's livelihoods programme, which has provided to £0.1 million in 2002–03, £6 million in 2003–04 and has allocated around £13 million for 2004–05 to fund a mixture of practical research, income generation projects, natural resource management related projects and capacity building in key line ministries.

Payments to the ARTF cover recurrent costs along with a range of activities prioritised within the national development budget including areas such as health, education, urban development, water and sanitation.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many ex-combatants in Afghanistan have been demobilised; and what proportion of them have been reintegrated into public life. [178036]

Hilary Benn: According to the Afghanistan New Beginnings Programme, the UN organisation responsible for disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration in Afghanistan, 6,819 former combatants had been demobilised by 27 May, and 5,768 of those had passed through the reintegration process.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the consultative group mechanism, leading to the Afghanistan development forum, for the co-ordination of donor assistance. [178037]

Hilary Benn: As a mechanism the Consultative Groups (CG) work well in bringing together various donors and the Government to ensure co-ordination of assistance. DFID works hard in the Groups, of which it is a part, to ensure that they are as effective as possible. An Afghan Government Ministry chairs each CG and, since the inception of the CG process, the capacity of many Ministries has increased, helping to improve the effectiveness of the process. DFID, and the rest of the international community, will continue to work with the Afghan Government to make sure the system continues to be as effective as possible.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what has been the life expectancy in Afghanistan in each year since 1979; [178038]

(2) what the literacy rate has been in Afghanistan in each year since 1979. [178041]

Hilary Benn: Due to conflict and political instability, reliable data is not available between 1978 to 2001, but there are many reasons to believe that social indicators such as life expectancy and literary rates, have deteriorated during this time.

The most recent figures from the World Health Organisation show that the average life expectancy in Afghanistan is 42.6 years.

The most recent figures from the UN show adult literacy rates at 36 per cent.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what proportion of people in Afghanistan consume less than the minimum daily calorific requirement. [178040]

Hilary Benn: According to the last national vulnerability assessment report in Afghanistan for 2003, it is estimated that 20–24 per cent. of the population get less than the minimum daily calorie requirement.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what his estimate is of the proportion of the population in Afghanistan who live on less than one dollar per day. [178042]

Hilary Benn: The latest World Bank figures show that the majority (53 per cent.) of the population in Afghanistan live below the poverty line, surviving on less than $1 per day. 70 per cent. live below $2 per day. The principal cause of such poverty is prolonged violence and conflict in Afghanistan. Severe drought during the 1990's further worsened the position of many Afghans.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the latest *(a)* child and *(b)* maternal mortality rate in Afghanistan is. [178043]

Hilary Benn: The most recent figures from the World Health Organisation show infant mortality rates at 165 per 1,000 live births; under 5 mortality rates 257 per 1,000 and maternal mortality 820 per 100,000 live births.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department has taken *(a)* with the Afghan Transitional Administration and *(b)* with the private sector to support the development of sustainable livelihoods for poor Afghans. [178044]

Hilary Benn: DFID is working with the Afghan Government and other international donors to support the development of sustainable livelihoods through the Natural Resource Management and Livelihoods and Social Protection Consultative Groups. DFID's livelihoods programme is concentrating resources on development priorities as set out by the Afghan Transitional Administration in the National Development budget.

DFID is funding a mixture of practical research, income generation activities, community development projects and technical assistance and training in the Ministries of Rural Rehabilitation and Development and Agriculture and Animal Husbandry.

DFID is also an active participant in the Consultative Group on Trade and Investment, the donor and Government consultative group that drives trade and investment and private sector development strategy in Afghanistan and is in dialogue with members of the Afghan business community. In addition, DFID currently financially supports (£3 million over three years) the Microfinance Investment and Support Facility Afghanistan (MISFA), which provides financial services to poor and low-income households, to enable them to invest in enterprise activities, meet emergency needs, reduce vulnerability, and build assets.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent discussions he has had with the Afghan Transitional Administration about the effectiveness of humanitarian aid provided by his Department. [178045]

Hilary Benn: DFID staff in Kabul are in regular contact with the Afghan Government discussing a range of issues, including humanitarian assistance. In mid-June a team will hold discussions with the Afghan Government and other agencies about the effectiveness of past humanitarian support, and the priorities that exist for programming funds in the current financial year. In addition to this, DFID is participating with a number of donors in a joint evaluation to assess the effectiveness of their humanitarian and reconstruction assistance in Afghanistan since 2001.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what his most recent estimate is of Afghanistan's annual gross domestic product per capita. [178046]

Hilary Benn: The International Monetary Fund's most recent estimate of gross domestic product per capita is US$186.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the level of private sector investment in Afghanistan was in each of the last three years. [178053]

Hilary Benn: Until the formation of the Afghan Investment Support Agency (AISA) in 2003, there was no way to track the amount or level of investment in Afghanistan. AISA figures show that by the end of 2003, $22 million had been invested by 24 companies, 70 per cent. of whom were foreign companies. In the half year from January 2004, the number of new investors increased to 369 with total investment amounting to around $360 million.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much money was *(a)* committed and *(b)* spent by his Department on the national development framework in Afghanistan in each of the last two years. [178055]

Hilary Benn: DFID provide around half of our annual development assistance through the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), which funds the National Development Budget.

In the last two financial years, DFID have delivered the funds committed to the ARTF. In 2002–2003 DFID provided £15 million through the ARTF, and in 2003–2004 this increased to £30 million. DFID will provide a further £45 million to the ARTF for 2004–05, of which £25 million has been disbursed.

Apart from DFID's ARTF contributions, the majority of DFID's bilateral programme also focuses on priority programmes in the National Development Framework.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the nature is of the technical support provided by his Department for the political transition process in Afghanistan. [178056]

Hilary Benn: No technical assistance has been provided directly by DFID for the political transition process in Afghanistan. In 2003, DFID contributed £1 million to support the constitutional process in Afghanistan through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). DFID also funded a political and constitutional study, which was translated into Dari and Pashto. The new constitution was agreed in December 2003.

DFID has contributed a total of £14.6 million to the elections process so far. This includes support for voter registration provided through UNDP, civic education through Swiss Peace and building the capacity of the Afghan media through the BBC.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps have been taken by his Department to improve economic and financial management in Afghanistan. [178057]

Hilary Benn: DFID is working closely with the Ministry of Finance to enhance domestic revenues. Domestic revenues generated from customs revenues and domestic taxation amounted to US$ 200 million for Solar Year 1382. This constituted a small proportion of the US$ 2.2 billion budget. Increasing the government's capacity to generate domestic revenues is vital if Afghanistan is to cease being aid-dependent in the future. DFID is supporting the Ministry of Finance in undertaking both customs and tax reform over the next three years.

DFID is also supporting the Afghan Government in modernising its budget formulation process. DFID is assisting the Afghan Transitional Administration in formulating the budget on good budgeting principles which focus on achieving service delivery. The introduction and implementation of good budgetary practices will in time lead to a full Medium Term Budget Programme which will have a unified current and capital budget based on available resources allocated to priority programmes.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps have been taken by his Department to develop public administration in Afghanistan. [178058]

Hilary Benn: DFID plays a key role in addressing the public administration needs of Afghanistan. As well as the three capacity building projects in the Ministry of Finance, DFID is providing $2.5 million to the World Bank lead Second Emergency Public Administration Project (total grant value $10.9 million), which will support the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC) to manage administrative reform in Afghanistan and to recruit and manage a professional and ethical civil service into the future. The IARCSC will use a merit-based recruitment process, which should contribute both to a professionalisation of the civil service and to a decrease in the destabilising tendency toward ethnic concentration in ministries and Departments.

DFID is to date the largest single donor to the Afghanistan Stabilisation Programme (ASP), which aims to re-establish governance and public administration throughout the provinces and districts of Afghanistan. The total value of this programme is £173 million, to which DFID has contributed £20 million. The ASP will reconstruct district administration buildings where necessary, establish communications and support the recruitment and management of effective personnel. This will contribute to an improvement in public services to provinces and districts, as well as to strengthening the centre's relations to the populations outside Kabul and the bigger cities.

DFID is also contributing £1 million to the development of an effective cabinet secretariat, which will facilitate rational decision-making at the centre of Government.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will provide a breakdown of his Department's expenditure on the UK Delivery Plan in support of the Afghan national strategy. [178060]

Hilary Benn: The UK Drugs Delivery Plan is costed for the first three years of the strategy. DFID's contributions are in the area of alternative livelihoods and are broken down in the following table.

	Amount (£ million)
2003–04	1.6
2004–05	1.9
2005–06	1.9

In addition to the money allocated under the UK Drugs Delivery Plan, DFID disbursed just over £5 million for livelihoods programmes and projects in 2003–04, and has allocated a further £12 million in the current financial year.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what targets were set for his Department's work with the Aga Khan Foundation in Badakhshan on Integrated Rural Rehabilitation to improve livelihoods and curb poppy cultivation; and what results have been achieved. [178062]

Hilary Benn: The objective of the Aga Khan Foundation project in Badakhshan is to provide support for sustainable economic and social incentives to make food production and off-farm employment an attractive alternative to opium cultivation. DFID has agreed with the Aga Khan Foundation, a range of activities and outputs for the project, including the stimulation of rural incomes and improved agricultural production through training, agricultural inputs such as seed and fertilizer, and improved veterinary facilities. Progress against these is regularly monitored but it remains too early in the project to assess results.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the role of his Department has been in implementing the Development of Sustainable Agricultural Livelihoods project in Eastern Hazarajat; and what the results of the project have been. [178063]

Hilary Benn: DFID is funding the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation £3.8 million over four years to implement the Development of Sustainable Agricultural Livelihoods project in Eastern Hazarajat. The project has now been under implementation for 10 months.

The project has established a management and administration unit in Eastern Hazarajat. Surveys of existing livelihood systems and of local institutional capacity have been carried out. The project is now working with farmer-based organisations, the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry and local NGOs to select communities for piloting measures to improve food security and create opportunities for income generation and employment. It is intended to scale up successful experience from these pilots more widely in the region.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the total sum of short-term bridging funding has been by his Department for micro-credit initiatives through BRAC; and what the results have been. [178064]

Hilary Benn: DFID provided a bridging fund of £203,931 to BRAC for its micro-credit project in Afghanistan. DFID's grant assisted BRAC to open branch offices in 14 districts of four provinces, establish 388 Village Organisations, and disburse more than US$650,000 of loan to around 7,000 women borrowers.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the total sum of short-term bridging funding has been by his Department for the development of livelihoods monitoring through the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development and the Afghan Research and Evaluation Unit; and what the findings of the monitoring have been. [178065]

Hilary Benn: DFID provided £50,000 to fund the Afghan Research and Evaluation Unit in 2003–04 to assess the information generated by the Vulnerability Assessment Mapping review in 2002 and the contribution that information made to the programming of humanitarian interventions and its potential value to 2003.

DFID is also providing £538,536 funding to a consortium of NGOs consisting of ACF, GOAL and Save the Children (US) to pilot a standardized round of data collection, analysis and dissemination for the National Surveillance System in seven provinces.

The piloting phase focused on testing methodologies and data collection techniques appropriate for the Afghanistan context, building capacity and structures at the provincial level to collect and manage data and use the findings to advocate for programs and/or target resources for already existent programs, and providing information on the feasibility of running an effective national level system. It also provided in depth information on livelihoods, food security and nutrition situation in the seven provinces where government surveillance units were active. To further develop a national methodology, implement a second round of data collection and link results to programming, and further develop capacity of key government staff at district and provincial levels.

The completion of these activities will lay the groundwork for an EU funded four-year project for the 2004 National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment to be implemented through the Vulnerability and Analysis Unit of the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development. This is scheduled to start in July-August 2004.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the extent to which the constitutional consultation process in Afghanistan is taking account of the views and interests of women. [178066]

Hilary Benn: DFID contributed £650,000 to support the public consultation on the constitution and preparations for the Constitutional Loya Jirga which was held in December 2003.

Women's rights were explicitly protected in Afghanistan's constitution. The final charter avoids making any explicit reference to Shari'a, the traditional Islamic law that is often interpreted to discriminate against women. It guarantees that "any kind of discrimination and privilege between the citizens of Afghanistan are prohibited. The citizens of Afghanistan—whether man or woman—have equal rights and duties before the law."

Female delegates at the Constitutional Loya Jirga also argued successfully to double the number of seats for women in the Wolesi Jirga (House of People). Women will now comprise 25 per cent. of this body. The

constitution also requires that 50 percent of presidential appointments to the Meshrano Jirga (House of Elders) will be women.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assistance has been provided by his Department to the Public Information Unit of the Afghan Transitional Administration to improve communication with the population. [178067]

Hilary Benn: DFID is providing £1.5 million over three years to build the public information capacity of the Office of the President. The project will be administered by the United Nations Development Programme and will begin later this year.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent assessment he has made of the extent to which the national education budget of Afghanistan is meeting needs; and what advice has been provided by his Department. [178068]

Hilary Benn: Since the fall of the Taliban, donors have been working through the Afghan Education Consultative Group to improve access to education and increase enrolment. The results look encouraging. More than four million children have returned to school, 37 per cent. of them girls. There are now 70,000 teachers (one third are women) and 6,500 schools.

DFID is not a member of the Afghan Education Consultative Group. In line with the Transitional Administration's National Development Framework which is designed to coordinate assistance from donors and multilateral organisations, the British Government has concentrated our assistance on areas where DFID can have most impact. DFID's focus has been on helping to put in place an economic management framework, improving livelihoods in rural and provincial areas, security sector reform and counter narcotics.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent assessment he has made of the extent to which donors to Afghanistan have provided the technical assistance required to establish a sustainable health system. [178069]

Hilary Benn: DFID has made no specific assessment of technical assistance (TA) being provided by the international community.

DFID is currently providing two consultants to the Ministry of Health (MoH). Their Terms of Reference are for them to work very closely with Health Ministers. Although one of these consultants will not be visiting Afghanistan until next month, the other one has been working with the MoH for the last two years and feedback that we have from the MoH is that this assistance has been of very high quality.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent input has been made by his Department to the development of health policy in Afghanistan. [178070]

Hilary Benn: Over the last two years DFID has been providing strategic support to the Ministry of Health (MoH). DFID has supported development of their interim health strategy and provided consultants to start mapping out policy options in budgeting, health financing, human resources and hospital management.

DFID has also agreed to help implement the MoH's Priority Reform and Restructuring programme in the: (i) Liaison Office of Provincial Health; (ii) 32 Provincial Health Offices; (iii) Policy and Planning Department; and (iv) Health Care and Promotion Department. This will be over three years.

DFID's assistance has been and will continue to be coordinated through the Health Sector Consultative Group.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to enable the Afghan Transitional Administration to tackle its capacity constraints. [178071]

Hilary Benn: DFID is financing three capacity building projects within the Afghan Ministry of Finance. The three-year project to support the Afghan Customs Department will strengthen the institutional capacity of the Afghan Customs Department to formulate and implement policy, to manage human resources, define and deliver on training needs, to organise its workload effectively and ethically.

The three-year project to support the Afghan Tax Administration will increase capacity within the General Presidency of Revenue (GPR) to implement strategic policy through modernisation of revenue administration, development of a comprehensive legislative base for taxation policy and administrative reform, training and capacity building of the workforce.

The three-year Budget Formulation Project will strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Finance to lead and co-ordinate the budget formulation process, and strengthen the capacity of Afghan ministries to formulate their budgets on good budgeting principles eventually leading towards the implementation of a Medium Term Budget Programme.

DFID is also supporting the overall capacity constraints that face the Transitional Afghan Administration by supporting the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC) to develop and implement a system for managing a skilled, professional and ethical civil service. Together with the World Bank, DFID is contributing a total of $10.9 million, of which $2.5 million is a contribution by DFID. This grant will increase the ability of the IARCSC to manage the capacity needs of the future.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the size is of Afghanistan's current debt to international financial institutions. [178073]

Hilary Benn: Following the clearance of the arrears to multilateral institutions, Afghanistan's current debt outstanding is US$49.5 million to the World Bank and US$9.2 million to the Asian Development Bank.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the total financial allocation was of his Department's Asia division to Afghanistan in 2003–04. [178074]

Hilary Benn: The total financial allocation from Asia division to Afghanistan in 2003–04 was £75 million.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much money from the Global Conflict Prevention Pool was spent in Afghanistan in 2003–04. [178075]

Hilary Benn: In 2003–04, £12 million was spent in Afghanistan from the Afghanistan Global Conflict Prevention Pool (GCPP) strategy, and £8.4 million from the Counter Narcotics GCPP strategy.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the total amount was of EU Development Assistance to Afghanistan in 2003–04; and if he will give a breakdown of the expenditure. [178076]

Hilary Benn: In 2003, the European Commission delivered over €300 million (including extra €50 million to promote security by supporting police salaries and training, and €55 million from the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO). The breakdown of this funding is shown below.

Funding to Afghanistan in 2003

	£millions		
Recovery and reconstruction	*2003 committed*	*2003 contracted*	*2003 contracted percentage*
Aid to uprooted people	*	—	—
Reconstruction support first tranche	79.5	73	—
Reconstruction support—second tranche	79.5	42	—
Food security	30	5.5	—
Rapid reaction mechanism	—	—	—
Return of Afghan nationals	7	3.5	—
Reallocation of ALA under-committed funds to Afghanistan	50	50	—
Total reconstruction support	246	174	70
Humanitarian ECHO	55	50.4	92
Total humanitarian and development	301	224	75

These figures are available on the EU website at http://europa.eu.int

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what his latest assessment is of progress in the implementation of the Bonn Agreement in relation to Afghanistan. [178077]

Hilary Benn: Good progress has been made towards implementing the Bonn Agreement in Afghanistan, most recently the adoption of a new constitution at the Constitutional Loya Jirga in December last year. The next big challenge will be elections, which are due to be held in September this year.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the programme management responsibilities are of his Department's office in Afghanistan. [178078]

Hilary Benn: Responsibility for management of DFID's programme in Afghanistan is split between the DFID office in Kabul and the DFID Afghanistan desk in London. The Afghanistan programme is presently working towards full devolution of programme management to Kabul, the timing of which will depend on the security situation in Afghanistan.

Africa

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions he has had with UK industry on facilitating the use of alternative energy technologies in Africa. [176833]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID recognises the importance of improving access to affordable and sustainable energy services in Africa, in support of livelihoods and in the provision of social services. This is particularly difficult in rural areas where conventional technologies, such as grid-connected electricity, are expensive or impractical. Decentralised options using alternative technologies, including those based on renewable energy, may help provide a solution to meeting energy requirements.

DFID is working with international networks such as the Global Village Energy Partnership and the EU Energy Initiative to promote access to energy services, drawing on the full menu of technology options. This is a commitment in the UK Energy White Paper of February 2003. DFID is also working with other Government Departments, including the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department of Trade and Industry, to ensure that their efforts to promote alternative technologies and the interest of UK industry is consistent with our poverty reduction objectives.

In addition, DFID maintains contact with UK business groups such as the Business Council for Sustainable Energy (BCSE), which was established in 2001 to promote sustainable energy, including the greater global use of renewable energy.

Cameroon

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what his Department's expenditure was on forestry-related projects in Cameroon in *(a)* 2001, *(b)* 2002, *(c)* 2003 and *(d)* 2004; what the projected spending is for (i) 2005 and (ii) 2006; and if he will make a statement; [177983]

(2) what plans his Department has to support efforts to *(a)* combat trade in illegal timber and *(b)* promote reform of the forestry sector in Cameroon; and if he will make a statement; [177984]

(3) what action the Government is taking to support efforts to *(a)* combat the trade in illegal timber and *(b)* reform the forestry sector in Cameroon; and if he will make a statement on his Department's objectives for work in the country; [177985]

(4) what analysis his Department has undertaken of the state of the forestry sector in Cameroon; [177986]

(5) what his Department's commitments are to funding community development projects in Cameroon; and if he will make a statement. [177987]

Hilary Benn: The Department for International Development's (DFID) expenditure on forestry-related projects in Cameroon over the past three financial years has been: *(a)* 2001, £2.6 million *(b)* 2002, £2.4 million; *(c)* 2003, £1.0 million[1]. The planning figure for 2004–05 is £3 million. DFID's future forestry support of Cameroon will be focused on the African Forestry Law Enforcement and Governance initiative. DFID plans to commit £11 million over the next four years in support of the Cameroon Government's Forest and Environment Sector Programme (FESP).

The FESP is being implemented by the Government with support from DFID, the World Bank, the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), the Canadian International Development Institute (CIDA), the European Union (EU) and the French Development Agency (AFD). The programme aims to implement wide ranging institutional reform and an effective strategy to control illegal logging, and to take measures to consolidate the rights of communities and protect the community forests from industrial exploitation. In particular, community development will be supported through the redistribution of a proportion of forestry revenues to rural communities. DFID also plans to develop a related initiative to strengthen the contribution of civil society and the private sector to forest sector reform.

Extensive analysis of the forestry sector has been undertaken by the Government, DFID and other donors as part of the FESP appraisal process, including a thorough social, economic and environmental assessment. In addition, DFID and the World Bank have commissioned reviews of over 10 years of fiscal and community forest reform.

DFID is strongly committed to stopping illegal logging and international trade in illegally produced forest products. One of the central aims of the reform programme is to stop illegal logging through (i) strengthening the capacity of government regulatory agencies (ii) introducing new forest management standards and regulatory systems (iii) encouraging increased community involvement (iv) encouraging private sector involvement in the management and (v) maintaining the independent monitor of forest operations.

Specifically, DFID has funded an independent body (Global Witness) to monitor the conduct of forest operations for the past three years in order to improve governance and transparency in the forest sector. DFID also strongly endorses the EU Forest Law and Governance Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan. We are encouraging the Government of Cameroon to develop a Voluntary Partnership Agreement with the EU to support its reforms and prevent illegal exports of timber. Such an agreement would strengthen government efforts to stop illegal logging and promote sustainable forestry.

In addition to Community Development support through the FESP, DFID funds various community development projects. The Small Grants Scheme, operating through the British High Commission, supports a wide range of development proposals from different Non Governmental Organisations and Community Based Organisations on a annual basis (e.g. in Human rights, Education, Health, Water and Sanitation). DFID also supports a Capacity Building Programme run by the Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV) to strengthen civil society organisations in the forest sector. Assistance is also provided to the Cameroon Mountain Conservation Foundation (CAMCOF), to provide funding to enable communities to be engaged in biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use, thereby improving livelihoods.

[1] Rounded to the nearest £100,000

DAC/OECD Taskforce

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the role of the UK Government with regard to the DAC-OECD Task Force. [176794]

Hilary Benn: A senior DFID official chaired the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Task Force on Donor Practices and Aid Harmonisation. The Task Force produced the DAC Guidelines 'Harmonising Donor Practices for Effective Aid Delivery' which set out good practices for improving harmonisation. At the DAC High Level Forum in Rome, February 2003, the representatives of 51 multilateral and bilateral development agencies, including DFID, and 28 developing countries endorsed the Guidelines and committed themselves to taking forward this agenda. DFID produced a Harmonisation Action Plan in February 2003 that we are due to report on (at the DAC) in early July.

Following the Rome Declaration, the DAC Working Party on Aid Effectiveness and Donor Practices was established to further the work of the DAC Task Force. DFID is represented at official level on the Working Party and its sub-groups; the Task Team on Harmonisation and Alignment, Joint Venture on Public Financial Management, Joint Venture on Managing for Development Results, Procurement Capacity Building and Aid Untying. DFID staff members have attended meetings of all five subgroups since their inception, making a significant contribution to their work programmes. A second High Level Forum will take place in Paris in March 2005, to take stock of progress and accelerate action in key areas.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what approach the UK Government is taking with regard to the regulation of aid-giving policies encouraged by the DAC-OECD Task Force, with specific reference to Africa. [176795]

Hilary Benn: The main output of the OECD Development Assistance Committee Task Force on Donor Practices was a report in 2003 on "Harmonising Donor Practices for Effective Aid Delivery". Rather than seeking to regulate aid donor behaviour, it sets out good

practices for donors to follow. DFID has adopted an Action Plan to promote Harmonisation, which aims to reinforce on-going changes within DFID (as well as encouraging similar reforms in other donor agencies). These changes make procedures simpler and more flexible, so that we can more easily harmonise with other donors, align our assistance with national poverty reduction strategies, and make greater use of partner government systems (rather than separate parallel channels) where this is appropriate. DFID is also aligning its own internal incentives to ensure that they encourage staff to promote these good practices.

Harmonisation is a particularly high priority for African governments which find dealing with a large number of donor agencies burdensome. DFID supports many country-led harmonisation initiatives like Uganda's Partnership Principles and Rwanda's Partnership Framework, and has led donor efforts to harmonise budget support in several countries including Ethiopia, Ghana and Mozambique. DFID also plays a leading role in the Strategic Partnership with Africa which is a World Bank-chaired forum bringing together representatives of major donors and African governments to challenge and help donors to improve their performance.

Departmental Staff

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what percentage of *(a)* his Department's and *(b)* Commonwealth Development Corporation staff were (i) women and (ii) from ethnic minorities in each year since 1997, broken down by grade. [177055]

Gareth Thomas: Details of the percentages of women and ethnic minorities (i.e. where ethnicity has been declared) in DFID's civil service staff, by grade from 1998 onwards, are set out in table A.

Comparable gender data is not available for 1997, and ethnicity data is not available prior to 2001.

Details of the percentages of women and ethnic minorities in the CDC Group Plc (known as the Commonwealth Development Corporation until 1999) have been obtained directly from the CDC Group Plc and are set out in table B.

Table A: DFID

Percentage

Grade	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Senior civil service								
Women	N/A	18.4	17.5	14.3	16.0	16.7	20.6	22.7
Ethnic minorities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	6.7	11.4	9.1	10.6
A1								
Women	N/A	11.7	12.2	19.2	24.2	25.0	24.5	29.1
Ethnic minorities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	[1]—	7.4	8.0	12.5
A2								
Women	N/A	26.4	26.7	27.7	33.3	39.2	40.2	43.8
Ethnic minorities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4.9	6.9	7.9	8.9
A3								
Women	N/A	39.7	43.8	50.0	50.0	49.1	54.2	52.3
Ethnic minorities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5.7	9.1	10.0	12.2
B1								
Women	N/A	38.5	36.8	40.3	42.2	44.0	45.9	45.9
Ethnic minorities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4.7	11.6	9.3	18.0
B2								
Women	N/A	49.1	49.2	50.0	51.9	54.1	52.5	52.4
Ethnic minorities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	9.6	13.0	13.9	14.5
C1								
Women	N/A	65.4	66.1	70.0	68.2	67.3	66.9	66.8
Ethnic minorities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	14.2	16.6	17.6	13.6
C2								
Women	N/A	55.9	58.1	55.6	56.7	51.1	56.7	51.8
Ethnic minorities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	9.8	10.0	9.2	16.7

[1] Not known.

Table B: CDC Group plc

Percentage

	Women	*Ethnic Minorities*
1997	N/A	N/A
1998	32.8	5.3
1999	33.8	4.8
2000	33.8	4.8
2001	32.3	4.7
2002	32.3	6.5
2003	35.8	6.4
2004	61.4	7.6

Extractive Industries

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make it his policy to support each of the recommendations of the World Bank's Extractive Industries Review. [177718]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Carshalton and Wallington (Tom Brake) on 1 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 619W.

Faayab (Development Assistance)

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions he has had with his colleagues in the European Union about the EU Development Assistance project in Faayab that was interrupted in April 2003. [177119]

Hilary Benn: DFID officials have regular contact with European Union colleagues about assistance to Afghanistan. However, they are not aware of any discussions about this particular project.

India

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much aid his Department has provided to India in each year since 1997. [176975]

Hilary Benn: Total annual DFID[1] bilateral programme expenditure in India from 1996–97 to 2003–04 was as follows:

[1] DFID came into being in May 1997. Expenditure in 1996–97 was by the Overseas Development Administration (ODA).

	£ million
1996–97	92.04
1997–98	80.36
1998–99	88.78
1999–2000	102.12
2000–01	116.91
2001–02	184.97
2002–03	160.87
2003–04	[1]198.05

[1] Estimated spend.

Source:
Statistics for International Development (various years).

Indonesia

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assistance is being offered to Indonesia following the evacuation of 20,000 people from villages on Sangihe Island. [178311]

Hilary Benn: None. The Indonesian authorities, working with local NGOs, are managing the evacuation well and have not asked for international assistance. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is monitoring the situation and is prepared to provide assistance, and co-ordinate international support, if needed. DFID is providing financial support for OCHA operations in Indonesia, and this will be available for evacuees from Sangihe Island, should it be required.

Iraq

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will place in the Library a list of *(a)* allocations made so far and *(b)* decisions for allocations not yet disbursed, and the sum involved in each case, by the Coalition Provisional Authority Programme Review Board in respect of the Development Fund for Iraq. [177676]

Hilary Benn: As of 4 June 2004, total disbursements from the Development Fund for Iraq (DFI) amounted to $11.0 billion, as shown in the following table.

An estimated $3.7 billion in outstanding commitments is expected to be disbursed by the end of 2004.

The main expenditure areas are: the wheat purchase program, the currency exchange program, the electricity and oil infrastructure programs, equipment for Iraqi security forces, and for Iraqi civil service salaries and ministry budget operations.

A detailed breakdown of expenditures under the DFI and the minutes of the Programme Review Board (PRB) meetings are publicly accessible and regularly posted on: www.iraqcoalition.org/budqet

Development Fund of Iraq as at June 2004

	Disbursements since inception ($)
Baghdad Central	2,635,799.40
Central Bank of Iraq	23,482,105.44
CJTF#7	12,146,904.60
Coalition Military Assistance Training Team	18,787,188.14
Commanders Emergency Response Program	386,583,988.00
Communication Support Office	1,659,897.06
Comptrollers Office	2,100,000.00
CPA Front Office	2,160,290.16
Governance	10,000.00
Ministry of Agriculture	20,097,406.30
Ministry of Communications	2,080,000.00
Ministry of Culture	20,000.00
Ministry of Education	1,100,000.00
Ministry of Electricity	155,353,242.74
Ministry of Finance	7,956,060,416.57
Ministry of Housing and Construction	405,031.66
Ministry of Interior	46,851,310.60
Ministry of Justice	1,000,219.50
Ministry of National Security and Defence	3,130,506.39
Ministry of Oil	1,551,233,904.96
Ministry of Planning	5,558,698.00
Ministry of Public Works	26,116.00
Ministry of Trade	129,381,909.68
Ministry of Transportation	1,706,687.00
Office of Security Cooperation	10,711,762.32
Private Sector Development	13,665.00
Program Management Office	17,920,000.00
Rapid Regional Response Program	195,251,744.69
Regional Projects—CPA South	28,924,414.64
State Oil Marketing Organisation	20,178,353.52
Strategic Communications	361,000.00
US Army Corps of Engineers	302,979,304.13
World Food Programme	143,376,100.00
Total	11,043,287,966.50

Source:
www.iraqcoalition.org

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the response of the Coalition Provisional Authority Programme Review Board has been to the inquiry of the International Advisory and Monitoring Board in respect of the Development Fund for Iraq about why the fund had paid Halliburton for uncontested contracts; how much money is involved in such contracts; which companies were the beneficiaries; what the position of the UK representative on the Review Board was; and if he will make a statement. [177677]

Hilary Benn: The International Audit and Monitoring Board (IAMB) has sought clarification on the use of non-competitive bidding procedures for some contracts funded from the Development Fund for Iraq (DFI) and has requested access to US Government Agency audits of sole-sourced contracts funded by the DFI. The Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA)

Administrator has reported that the CPA is liaising with US Government Agencies to obtain copies of the audit reports.

The DFI Program Review Board assesses and approves expenditure proposals only for the DFI, not contractors. The UK representative on the Programme Review Board (PRB) does not, therefore, take a position on specific contractual decisions. Neither DFID, nor the IAMB, have a comprehensive breakdown of the value and allocation of sole-sourced DFI contracts. A complete picture of the value of sole-sourced DFI contracts awaits the analysis of the audit reports.

The UK fully supports the role of the IAMB.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the members of the Coalition Provisional Authority Programme Review Board responsible for the Development Fund for Iraq; who appointed them; and whom they represent. [177678]

Hilary Benn: The voting members of the Iraqi Coalition Provisional Authority Program Review Board (PRB) are representatives of: the Iraqi Minister of Finance; the Iraqi Ministry of Planning and Development Co-operation; the CPA's Economic Affairs, Governance and Security Policy Offices, and Office of Infrastructure and Operations; the Coalition Military (Combined Joint Task Force 7); the Iraqi Council for International Co-operation; USAID; and the Governments of the United Kingdom and Australia. Members are appointed by the CPA Administrator.

National Area-Based Development Programme

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will provide a breakdown of his Department's contribution to the National Area-Based Development Programme; and what assessment he has made of the results of the programme. [178061]

Hilary Benn: DFID provided £1 million to the National Area-Based Development Programme in 2002. The programme has implemented a number of recovery projects, through NGOs, in 17 provinces in the education, infrastructure, health, irrigation, shelter and water supply sectors. Capacity building activities have also been undertaken in the lead Government Ministry, and the Ministry of Rural Reconstruction and Development (MRRD) to ensure they are able to successfully implement the programme.

Nepal

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the work of the Pahar Trust in Nepal. [178059]

Gareth Thomas: Although DFID is aware of the work of the Pahar Trust in school construction and friendship links between schools in the UK and Nepal, there has been no DFID assessment made of their work.

Sudan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the recent donor governments meeting held in Geneva to discuss what help should be made available for Darfur, Sudan. [178002]

Hilary Benn: On 3 June, a meeting of donors took place in Geneva to discuss the donor response to the humanitarian situation in Darfur, Sudan. The UK was represented by Alan Goulty, UK Special Representative for Sudan.

The meeting was co-chaired by the UN (Jan Egeland), EU (Tom Kitt, Minister for Development and Human Rights, Ireland) and Constanza Adonolfi, (Director of ECHO), and the US (Andrew Natsios, Administrator USAID). It was well attended by high level representatives of donors, UN agencies, NGOs and the Government of Sudan.

The UN presented a 90 day plan for Darfur, and highlighted the unmet requirements of the Darfur and Chad appeal ($236 million). Pledges in response to this request amounted to approximately $57 million Additionally, the US pledged $188 million to be disbursed from 4 June to the end of 2005.

The UK representative noted our commitment of over £19.5 million ($36.6 million) and anticipated that a further substantial commitment would be made during my visit to Sudan. I refer the hon. Member to the statement I made to the House on Wednesday 9 June, (column 275) where I stated that I had announced further funding of £15 million ($28.3 million).

At the meeting in Geneva, donors and humanitarian agencies including the UK stressed to the Government of Sudan the need to ensure the protection and security of its citizens, to respect human rights, and to actively implement the provisions of the Ceasefire agreed on 8 April. All parties to the conflict should provide full and unfettered access to humanitarian organisations.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assistance the Government is providing to *(a)* the Government of Sudan and *(b)* non-governmental organisations operating in Sudan, indicating in each case (i) the amount and (ii) the use to which funds are being put; and if he will make a statement. [175873]

Hilary Benn: DFID does not provide any direct financial assistance to the Government of Sudan. However, our embassy in Khartoum engages with the Government on a wide range of technical issues including human rights, debt relief, poverty reduction strategies, security reform, the rule of law and good governance. This engagement is supported in some instances by the provision of technical assistance and capacity building support to Government of Sudan and Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) officials.

DFID's support to non-governmental organisations since the beginning of April 2004 is listed as follows.

Assistance provided by DFID to non-governmental organisations in Sudan since 1 April 2004

NGO	*Project*	*£*
Action Contre la Faim (ACF)	Food security and surveillance programme in Bentiu, Rob Kona and Unity state to detect and treat malnourished among the vulnerable and war displaced	316,426
ACF	To provide emergency treatment for severe malnutrition in the Red Sea	202,593
ACF	Emergency Nutrition Programme in North Darfur	250,000
CARE	NGO initiative to strengthen, coordinate and facilitate local and international' NGOs efforts to influence and support the establishment and consolidation of a just and lasting peace	374,544
Concern	Supplementary and Community Therapeutic Care Emergency Nutrition to reduce the high malnutrition rates through targeted feeding for children under the age of five and pregnant and lactating mothers	300,000
Debt Relief International	To increase the knowledge of the Sudanese parties particularly the SPLM on debt issues and the HIPC process	150,000
Fondation Hirondelle	Assessment mission on the development of a project to establish a radio network as part of the peace process	21,413
GOAL	To assist in disease prevention, Primary health care and flood relief in Kassala	96,000
GOAL	Emergency Assistance to Population in Kutum Province, North Darfur—through a combined Health, Nutrition and Shelter Intervention	575,963
International Rescue Committee	Support towards increasing the ability of Sudanese communities and civil societies to be powerful actors in peace building, reconstruction and development	750,000
Medair	Emergency Nutrition project to target 20,000 Murle people and 900 internal displaced people	114,500
Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)	Health care Services in Jonglei to control main morbidity and mortality in the target areas	1,200,000
MSF	Health intervention to reduce morbidity and mortality from the main diseases amongst the displaced and conflict-affected population of the Wadi Sali, Mukjar, Mahalias, South Darfur State, Nyala and Mahalia areas	1,342,552
MSF	To control main morbidity and limit mortality in the target population through the provision of health care services	480,000
MSF	Health assistance for the residents and displaced populations in Jonglei and Upper Nile	424,000
MSF	Support to human trypanosomiasis to provide quality treatment for affected patients from Mundri counties	250,000
MSF	Three health interventions to reduce mortality and morbidity in Gederaf, Malkal and Wau states	350,000
MSF	Primary Health Programme to improve the overall health status of the population of Akop, Ananatak and Luacjang Payams in Tonj County Support to Primary Health Care in Tonj	265,439
MSF	Emergency Assistance to IDPs in Darfur—through increasing access to health care in conflict areas	491,369
MSF	Darfur Components of Emergency Health Interventions in Northern Sudan Project	650,000
Oxfam	Emergency Food and Nutrition intervention in Red Sea State to provide treatment for severe malnutrition	637,220
Oxfam	Public Health Humanitarian Response Darfur (Water/Sanitation Programme)	2,193,161
Rift Valley Institute (RVI)	Training course to increase participants effectiveness and to deepen understanding of the operating environment in Sudan	38,110
RVI	A survey to identify and mobilise the skills that exist in South Sudan and identify how they can be harnessed to perform key functions in the public sector in the transition to peace	198,220
RVI	A baseline study to provide a baseline record and a preliminary contextual analysis of the peace process in Sudan	58,096
Save the Children	Case resolution of and the eradication abduction of women and children in Sudan	500,000
Save the Children	Emergency Response to Conflict Related Internal Displacement in North Darfur	500,000
Skills for Sudan	Good Governance and policy issues workshop to assist the SPLM prepare good policies for Southern Sudan following the implementation of the peace process	74,490
Skills for Sudan	A survey to identify and mobilise the skills that exist in South Sudan and identify how they can be harnessed to perform key functions in the public sector in the transition to peace	198,220
Tear Fund	Nutrition and capacity building programme to improve health status	149,686
Tear Fund	To reduce high malnutrition rates in Aweil West through targeted feeding	618,584
Tear Fund	Emergency Nutrition, Health and Food Security: to continue to provide health care and to reduce, malnutrition	586,531
Tear Fund	To improve health status as indicated by lower morbidity and mortality rates related to nutrition maternal and childhood diseases among the risk populations of IDP camps in Khartoum State	122,046
World Vision	Emergency Nutrition in Tonj County to set up 10 supplementary dry distribution centres and two therapeutic feeding centres	513,706

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions have taken place between the United Kingdom Government and the Government of Sudan regarding reports of ethnic cleansing in the Darfur region of Sudan; and if he will make a statement. [176607]

Hilary Benn: The report of the Office of the UN Commissioner for Human Rights identifies disturbing patterns of massive human rights violations in Darfur perpetrated by the Government of Sudan and the Janjaweed militia, many of which may constitute war crimes and/or crimes against humanity. The report makes no conclusion as to ethnic cleansing, though it notes that repeated attacks on civilians by Government of Sudan military and its proxy militia forces appear to have been largely ethnically based.

DFID is in very close contact with the Government of Sudan about Darfur. My right hon. Friends the Foreign Secretary and the Minister for Africa, and I made very strong representations to the Sudanese Foreign Minister

when he visited London on 11 May. Since then I have had detailed discussions with the several Sudanese Government Ministers, including during my visit to Sudan on 6 to 8 June. The Sudanese Government can be in no doubt about the seriousness with which we view the situation.

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether any of the money the UK is spending on the Darfur region of Sudan is being paid directly to *(a)* the UN co-ordination effort and *(b)* via any part of the Sudanese Government; and if he will make a statement. [177715]

Hilary Benn: The information requested is as follows.

a *(a)* The UK has contributed £12.6 million to UN agencies engaged in Darfur since September 2003 (see following table). This includes direct support to the UN Co-ordination effort of:

four secondees to OCHA to assist in UN oversight of the response

£250,000 and three secondees to the UN Joint Logistics Centre, to improve their co-ordination of the humanitarian response We are also considering further support to the UN Co-ordination through contributions of personnel, equipment and logistics to OCHA and WFP.

(b) None of the UK contribution to the humanitarian response in Darfur is paid via any part of the Sudanese Government. A detailed breakdown of our agreed funding commitments is shown as follows.

I refer the hon. Member for Cambridge to the Statement I made to the House on my return from Sudan on 9 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 275.

Date	*Agency*	*Description*	*Total cost (£)*
Agreed commitment to UN agencies			
October to December 2003	UNHCR	Supplementary Appeal for Emergency Assistance to Sudanese Refugees in Eastern Chad—2003	1,000,000
March 2004 to January 2005	UNHCR	Emergency Assistance to Sudanese Refugees in Eastern Chad	1,000,000
November 2003 to March 2004	WFP	Additional Contribution to 2003 UN Appeal, due to Crisis in Darfur, to Provide Emergency Food Assistance to Sudanese Populations Affected by War and Natural Disasters	2,000,000
March to December 2004	WFP	Emergency Distribution of Food Aid Commodities to Sudanese Refugees in North East Chad	1,000,000
May to December 2004	WFP	Emergency purchase and distribution of Food Aid for internally displaced Sudanese in Darfur.	2,000,000
February to December 2004	UNICEF	Emergency Assistance to Humanitarian Crisis in Darfur for Health; Water Supply; Water and Environmental Sanitation; Relief and Shelter Items; and the Protection of Children	1,000,000
May to December 2004	UNICEF	Additional support to humanitarian assistance for crisis in Darfur; emergency nutrition; emergency health care and the protection of children	1,500,000
May to November 2004	WHO	Emergency primary health care and response to communicable diseases in Darfur; support to measles vaccination programme	1,500,000
May to July 2004	UN Joint Logistics Centre	Support to enable UNJLC to co-ordinate the logistics of an effective humanitarian response in Sudan	250,000
Support to the ICRC			
November to December 2003	ICRC	Contribution to the ICRC 2003 Emergency Appeal for Sudan	1,000,000
June to December 2004	ICRC	Contribution to the ICRC 2003 Emergency Appeal for Sudan	2,000,000
Agreed Commitment to NGOS			
October 2003 to September 2004	SC-UK	Emergency Response to Conflict Related Internal Displacement in North Darfur	500,000
January to April 2004	MSF-F	Emergency Assistance to IDPs in Darfur—through increasing access to health care in conflict areas, disease prevention, halting nutritional deterioration and treating malnourished children	491,369
June to December 2004	MSF-F	Emergency Assistance to IDPs in Darfur—through increasing access to health care in conflict areas, disease prevention, halting nutritional deterioration and treating malnourished children	1,006,860
January to December 2004	MSF-H	Darfur Components of Emergency Health Interventions in Northern Sudan Project	650,000
February to November 2004	GOAL	Emergency Assistance to Population in Kutum Province, North Darfur—through a combined Health, Nutrition and Shelter Intervention	575,963
March to December 2004	ACF	Emergency Nutrition Programme in North Darfur	250,000
March to November 2004	ACF	Emergency Nutrition Programme in North Darfur	623,326
April to December 2004	OXFAM	Public Health Humanitarian Response Darfur (Water/Sanitation Programme)	2,193,161
May to October 2004	MSF-Belgium	Emergency Health Care for IDPs in North Darfur	671,300
May to October 2004	CARE	Logistics operation to improve access to shelter and non-food items for IDPs in Greater Darfur	603,195
June 2004 to March 2005	International Rescue Committee	Provision of Environmental Health, Primary Health and Child Protection Services for War Affected Communities in North Darfur	728,849
Secondments			
March to June 2004	OCHA	Secondments of four staff (one Khartoum, three in Darfur)	218,759
May to July 2004	UNJLC	Secondment of three staff to UNJLC	125,000
Non-food Items			
May to June 2004	WFP	Provision of 264,800m of rope, 31,500 tarpaulins and 86,000 blankets	1,008,000
Total Humanitarian Assistance (DFID) Committed to Darfur since September 2003			23,895,782

Date	Agency	Description	Total cost (£)
Africa Conflict Prevention Pool			
May 2004	AU Monitoring Mission	Support for swift deployment of AU monitors (from Africa Conflict Prevention Pool)	2,000,000
Total UK Response to Darfur to date			25,895,782

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what discussions he had during his recent visit to Sudan on *(a)* ethnic cleansing in Darfur and *(b)* breaches in the ceasefire; and what access he had to internally displaced persons; [178008]

(2) whether he met Mr. Jan Egeland, the UN Emergency Relief Co-ordinator in Darfur during his recent visit; and what assessment he has made of Mr. Egeland's recent statements on the possibility of hundreds of thousands of people dying as a result of the situation in Sudan; [178009]

(3) what assessment he has made of the health of people in Darfur, Sudan, following his recent visit. [178010]

Hilary Benn: I discussed the security situation in Darfur with the Sudanese Government including the First Vice President, the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and the Minister of Finance. I stressed to them the importance of respecting the terms of the 8 April ceasefire and the need to rein in the Janjaweed and stop attacks on internally displaced persons (IDPs) and civilians. In my statements I also called on rebel groups to respect the ceasefire. The recent UN report on human rights in Sudan, while identifying disturbing patterns of human rights violations, stopped short of calling the conflict ethnic cleansing.

I met with the first African Union (AU) monitors in El Fasher, North Darfur. The AU is preparing to deploy 120 monitors across Darfur to support the terms of the 8 April ceasefire and the UK has contributed £2 million to the mission. We expect the deployment of ceasefire monitors to have a positive effect on the security situation.

Mr. Egeland was not in Sudan during my visit. I met with Kevin Kennedy, Acting UN Resident Co-ordinator/Humanitarian Co-ordinator for Sudan and Tom Vraalsen, UN Secretary General's Envoy on Humanitarian Affairs.

The security situation remains a real concern with attacks on civilians continuing. The scale of need is enormous and there are significant gaps in the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The onset of rains will hinder delivery and increase the vulnerability of the internally displaced persons. There is no doubt that urgent action is required by all parties. I echo Mr. Egeland's statements about the need for more donor assistance to Darfur. During my visit I announced a further allocation of £15 million for Darfur, taking the total UK allocation for humanitarian response to £34.5 million. DFID is also urging other donors to give more.

During my visit to Sudan I saw first hand the humanitarian crisis that is unfolding in Darfur. This is the most serious humanitarian emergency in the world today and many lives are at risk. The UN estimates that over one million people have had to flee their homes and that a further 130,000 refugees have crossed into Eastern Chad. During my time in Darfur, I visited three camps for internally displaced people. I visited a Medecins Sans Frontières feeding centre for young children at Kalma camp, near Nyala in South Darfur, which has approximately 20,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs). At El Meshtel, near El Fasher in Northern Darfur, I visited a temporary camp where many people have no shelter and are waiting for transfer to Abu Shouk. I then visited Abu Shouk, which has 30,000 IDPs already there.

I also spoke with representatives of UK funded NGOs and UN agencies engaged in provision of health care, including Medecins Sans Frontières the World Health Organisation and UNICEF. My visit and these discussions confirmed to me the gravity of the situation in Darfur, including that of the health of IDPs. There are high levels of malnutrition, and the lack of sanitation and adequate shelter is contributing to high child mortality rates. With the onset of rains, the risk from communicable diseases from poor sanitation will become more acute.

Trade Negotiations

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will publish the influencing strategy on trading opportunities for developing countries referred to on page 189 of the 2004 Departmental Report. [174115]

Hilary Benn: I have placed copies of a document that sets out the main elements of DFID's Doha Development Agenda strategy 2004–2005 in the Libraries of both Houses. The document is entitled 'DFID Doha Development Agenda Strategy 2004–05'.

Water

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what action has been taken on the recommendations made in the NAO report "Maximising impact in the water sector", published in January 2003, that his Department *(a)* should ensure that good quality information is available to assess progress towards poverty targets in those countries where it uses budget support to assist the water sector and *(b)* should give due weight to sanitation in developing its country assistance programmes. [177484]

Gareth Thomas: The information requested is as follows:

(a) Where DFID provides general budget support, our assistance to sectors such as water can best be assessed in terms of the proportion of budget going to particular sectors and in consultation with other donors. However, in terms of impact, progress in the sector is

best assessed by the data returned by the country departments themselves, supported where appropriate by technical assistance. For example, DFID have provided a water adviser to work with the Ministry of Finance in Uganda to assist in measurement of investment and impact in water and sanitation. Internationally, DFID provide support to the Joint Monitoring Programme of UNICEF and WHO, which assemble data on coverage by country, and DFID are currently supporting work to establish a better evidence base linking water and sanitation improvements to progress against the full range of poverty indicators using one of our Resource Centres.

(b) It is correct that sanitation often does not get the prominence it deserves, particularly at the national government levels. But there are some good examples of how greater importance can be focused on sanitation. In Bangladesh for example DFID is supporting WaterAid in raising the profile of water and sanitation in the Poverty Reduction Strategy and national sanitation strategy, as well as provided financial assistance in holding a regional sanitation conference for South Asian countries at the end of 2003 resulting in a declaration signed by ministers from nine countries. These examples show what can be done and how a higher profile for sanitation can be achieved. DFID are working with other countries and donors and our research centres to build on these lessons.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of water scarcity in *(a)* Yemen, *(b)* North West India, *(c)* Western China and *(d)* parts of Mexico. [177404]

Gareth Thomas: In general terms, DFID agreed at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg the target for all countries to develop Integrated Water Resources Management and Water Efficiency plans by 2005, with support to developing countries. DFID support the "Global Water Supply and Sanitation Assessment" reports of the UNICEF/WHO Joint Monitoring Programme which include water availability data and work under the Global Water partnership on integrated water resource management. These reviews assist in developing frameworks for better assessment, allocation and monitoring of water use, particularly in the water scarce areas mentioned.

(a) In Yemen recent DFID visits confirm that there continues to be very poor management of the water resource and a lack of action by government and others to prevent what is expected to be a severe water crisis in the next few years. The donor community has tried to intervene in this sector with little success due to the poor institutional arrangements. DFID is funding community based water supplies through its contributions to the Social Fund for Development and is considering more direct engagement in the sector once our Yemen programme is more established.

(b) In India DFID currently works in four focus states, none of which are in north-west India, as human development indicators for the NW states are relatively better than for other states where DFID work. As a result, DFID has not conducted specific examination of water scarcity in NW India nor undertaken specific projects there. However, our support to other programmes, notably through DFID-supported work with UNICEF, includes specific work on water scarcity in Rajasthan.

(c) There are substantial shortages of water in China, particularly in the west and north. In China as a whole, per capita water availability is a quarter of the world average. Almost one third of the world's population without access to safe drinking water and sanitation live in China. Water scarcity is increasingly seen as a factor limiting overall economic growth. DFID has developed a significant water related programme with a total commitment of around £30 million. This includes assistance in revising the national water law to promote more sustainable use; improving water demand management in the two provinces in the north-west and north-east; improving irrigation water use; and rural water supply and sanitation programmes in the south-west. DFID has a close collaboration with the World Bank and others in this area.

(d) DFID has no active water bilateral programme in Mexico although our support to international water programmes includes assistance to Mexico.

HEALTH

Abortion Clinics

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many abortion clinics have failed inspection by the National Care Standards Commission in the last 10 years; [163161]

(2) how many doctors employed in abortion clinics have been the subject of General Medical Council disciplinary proceedings since 1990; [163162]

(3) what safeguards are in place to ensure that abortions performed under section 1(1)*(a)* of the Abortion Act 1967 (as amended) take place within the 24-week time limit. [163164]

Miss Melanie Johnson: No approved independent sector abortion clinics have been closed by the National Care Standards Commission (NCSC), through lack of compliance with the Private and Voluntary Healthcare (England) Regulations 2001 (the Regulations), since it came into being on 1 April 2002. Following the 2002–03 inspection, however, one clinic chose to close voluntarily in order to give the provider time to comply with the requirements set.

Prior to 1 April 2002, abortion clinics were inspected separately by health authorities and the Department. In the last 10 years, one clinic had its registration under the Registered Homes Act 1984, and its approval under the Abortion Act 1967, withdrawn.

The General Medical Council is an independent, statutory body. The Department does not hold information on doctors that have been the subject of General Medical Council disciplinary proceedings.

Practitioners are legally required to send a notice of each termination performed in England to the chief medical officer. This notification must include details of the number of complete weeks of gestation and the grounds on which the abortion was carried out. Notifications are checked by the Department to ensure that the forms have been correctly completed. Statistics are published annually.

Agency Nurses

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much money was spent on agency nurses in *(a)* Hull and East Riding Hospitals NHS Trust and *(b)* Hull and East Riding Community Health NHS Trust in each year since 1997. [172758]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the tables.

(a) Expenditure on 'Agency Nurses' by Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals National Health Service Trusts—1997–98 to 2002–03

£

Trust name	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Royal Hull Hospitals NHS Trust	89,678	205,393	128,634	n/a	n/a	n/a
East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust	1,796	15,354	91,737	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total	91,474	220,747	220,371	n/a	n/a	n/a
Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust	n/a	n/a	159,045	0	309,187	551,525

(b) Expenditure on 'Agency Nurses' by Hull and East Riding Community Health NHS Trust—1997–98 to 2002–03

£

Trust name	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–0-1*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
East Yorkshire Community Healthcare NHS Trust	14971	132709	24356	n/a	n/a	n/a
Hull and Holderness Community Health NHS Trust	0	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total	14,971	132,709	24,356	n/a	n/a	n/a
Hull and East Riding Community Health NHS Trust	n/a	n/a	21,487	163,007	281,161	923,245

Note:
'Agency Nurses' = Non NHS nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff.
Source:
Annual financial returns of NHS trusts.

Accident and Emergency

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the percentage change in accident and emergency attendees was between 2001–02 and 2002–03: [173843]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The percentage change in the number of accident and emergency attendees between 2001–02 and 2002–03 was less than 0.01 per cent. Total attendances at accident and emergency departments in England in 2002–03 were 14,045,575. In 2001–02 the equivalent figure was 14,044,018.

Dentistry

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what method he proposes using to enable NHS dentists to know for which patients they have responsibility for NHS dental treatment; [177016]

(2) when he proposes publishing the new base contract for NHS dentists with his proposed contract values. [177019]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 7 June 2004]*: Drawing on the learning from personal dental services pilots and the field site programme being managed by the Modernisation Agency, to ensure a smooth transition to local commissioning, we will be working closely with the British Dental Association and the national health service to develop a simple and robust base contract that all primary care trusts (PCTs) and practices will be able to put in place from 2005. Details of the base contract are still under discussion.

The Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003 puts a new duty on all PCTs to provide or commission primary dental services "to the extent it considers necessary to meet all reasonable requirements" in its area. This is the same general duty as for other NHS services.

Under transitional arrangements, the new base contract will be made available, but dentists and PCTs who wish to develop this further will be able to do so. The transitional arrangements will provide protection of dentists' gross earnings for three years to enable them to come off the treadmill of item of service, to see their patients at intervals appropriate to their oral health needs and to modernise and adjust their workload.

The current statement of dental remuneration describes the care available on the NHS. We expect a similar range of care to be provided under the new system. As now, the care dentists offer must be necessary to secure oral health and dentists will be expected to provide all proper and necessary treatment which a dentist usually undertakes and which the patient is willing to undergo.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the timetable is for dentists to move onto the new NHS contract. [174454]

Mr. Hutton: We are implementing the biggest reform of national health service dentistry since 1948 and we have been consulting widely with the profession and others to get the detail right. We have just completed a consultation on our "Framework Proposals for Primary Care Dental Services in England". We are currently considering all the responses to the consultation, including whether any revision to the original timetable of April 2005 is necessary.

Endometriosis

Mr. Salter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much investment has been allocated to Reading Primary Care Trust for the care and management of endometriosis in each of the last five years. [177656]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Following the Department's 'Shifting the Balance of Power' initiative, funding is allocated to primary care trusts (PCTs) on the basis of the relative needs of their populations. It is for PCTs, in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders, to determine how best to use their funds to meet national and local priorities for improving health, tackling health inequalities and modernising services.

Ethical Recruitment

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when the Medway Care Agency was included on the Government's approved list of recruitment agencies who have signed up to the code of practice on ethical recruitment; [176293]

(2) when the approved list regarding those agencies who had signed up to the Government's code of practice on ethical recruitment was made available to the South Essex Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust; and how they were made aware of its existence; [176294]

(3) whether Mr. Tawanda Machigura was recruited directly from Zimbabwe by the Medway Care Agency; between what dates he was on Medway Care Agency's lists; and what work he had undertaken prior to signing up with Medway Care Agency. [176394]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 27 May 2004]*: The Medway Care Agency is not on the Government's approved list of agencies which adhere to the Code of Practice for International Recruitment. The Code was issued to all Trusts in October 2001. From inquiries made by the Department, it is understood that Mr. Tawanda Machigura was recruited by the Medway Care Agency in England, not from Zimbabwe. It is not known what work he had undertaken prior to signing up with the Medway Care Agency or between what dates he was on their lists.

Food Labelling

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will urge food manufacturers to label their foods more precisely in order to avoid serious allergic reactions with particular reference to anaphylactic shock. [176580]

Miss Melanie Johnson: New European Union rules on ingredients listing for pre-packed foods have been agreed recently (Directive 2003/89/EC); they will require declaration of all ingredients on the label, with only a small number of exemptions allowed. No exemptions are allowed for 12 specified food allergens and their allergenic derivatives: these include those allergens most often associated with anaphylactic shock. This will help those with food allergies identify products they may need to avoid. The new rules will come into effect in November 2005. In the meantime, the Food Standards Agency has issued advice encouraging voluntary declaration of specified allergens.

Glue Sniffing

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate the prevalence of glue sniffing among teenagers in *(a)* England and *(b)* each region in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [164867]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Health Service (Stoke)

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been spent on health in Stoke-on-Trent, North in each of the last seven years. [177624]

Dr. Ladyman: The information is not available in the format requested. Expenditure per weighted head of the population in the Shropshire and Staffordshire Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area, which includes the constituency of Stoke-on Trent North, has increased from £604.42 in 1997–98 to £910.52 in 2002–03, the latest year available. This does not represent the total expenditure per head, as an element of health expenditure cannot be identified by SHA area.

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes there have been to NHS waiting list times in the last seven years for residents of Stoke-on-Trent, North. [177625]

Dr. Ladyman: The information is not available in the form requested. The tables show the number of patients waiting for in-patient treatment and outpatient appointments at the University Hospital of North Staffordshire National Health Service Trust (formerly North Staffordshire Hospital NHS Trust) in each year since 1997.

		Months waiting to be seen					
As at March	*Total number of patients*	*0–2*	*3–5*	*6–8*	*9–11*	*12–14*	*15–17*
1997	6,988	3,697	1,858	958	382	93	0
1998	9,877	4,984	2,333	1450	718	376	16
1999	7,051	3,502	1,575	898	557	360	159
2000	7,134	3,421	1,623	882	647	450	111
2001	5,583	2,907	1,371	623	335	261	86
2002	7,365	3,806	1,996	1,067	496	0	0
2003	8,049	3,926	2,217	1,311	595	0	0
2004	6,237	4,065	1,615	557	0	0	0

Source:

Department of Health KH07.

Out-patient waiting lists by provider for the trust serving Stoke-on Trent, North—General practitioner referral to consultant waiting list in weeks

As at March	*Not seen 13 to 25*	*Not seen 26 plus*
1997	2,586	1,380
1998	3,369	2,845
1999	4,129	3,910
2000	4658	3537
2001	4,134	2,861
2002	3,197	0
2003	1,724	0
2004	540	0

Source:

Department of Health QM08.

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many senior citizens in Stoke-on-Trent, North have access to free eye tests. [177626]

Dr. Ladyman: Data for the number of sight tests by constituency or by the number of senior citizens are not collected centrally.

The total population for those aged 60 and over in Shropshire and Staffordshire Strategic Health Authority (SHA) is about 320,450. All people aged 60 and over are eligible for national health service sight tests.

The total number of NHS sight tests paid for by Shropshire and Staffordshire SHA in the year 2002–03 for the 'aged 60 and over' category was 138,040.

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on funding allocated through the LIFT programme to improve primary care in Stoke-on-Trent, North. [177627]

Dr. Ladyman: Funding for premises development, whether through local investment finance trusts (LIFT) or other means, is not allocated directly to projects by the Department. It is allocated to groups of primary care trusts (PCTs), which must decide what their priorities are and how they intend to spend their allocation.

My hon. Friend's constituency is served by North Stoke PCT, which is one of four PCTs collaborating in the North Staffordshire LIFT project. North Stoke PCT will be able to provide new primary care centres in Bucknall, Cobridge and Packmoor. The North Staffordshire LIFT project has an estimated capital value of £20 million, of which some £5.8 million is accounted for by the North Stoke elements.

In addition, the Department has made available capital funding to help kick start LIFT projects. The North Staffordshire LIFT project has been allocated £5.4 million to date. North Stoke PCT is using its share of these funds to purchase sites for the health centres at Bucknall, Cobridge and Packmoor. It has also used them to purchase temporary premises to serve the people of Packmoor until the permanent health centre there is operational. These temporary premises opened in April 2003 and have already significantly improved access to health services for local people.

Hospices (London)

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much financial assistance his Department has provided to hospices in the Greater London area in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [177824]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Hearing Aid Technicians

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many vacancies there are for hearing aid technicians in the NHS in England; and how many there were in 2003–04, broken down by region. [178425]

Mr. Hutton: Specific information is not collected on the number of vacancies for hearing aid technicians; they are included in the physiological measurement staff group. The table shows the number of vacancies lasting three months or more for physiological measurement staff by Government office region as at March 2003.

Department of health vacancies survey, March 2003; qualified physiological measurement staff by Government office region; three month vacancy rates, numbers and staff in post

Qualified physiological measurement

		Three month vacancy rate percentage March 2003	*Three month vacancy number*	*Staff in post (whole-time equivalent) September 2002*	*Staff in post (headcount)*
—	England	1.9	66	3,526	4,018
A	North East	1.6	3	218	236
B	North West	1.4	9	707	806
D	Yorkshire and the Humber	2.3	9	385	444
E	East Midlands	0.3	1	283	319
F	West Midlands	0.3	1	397	445
G	East Of England	2.2	5	257	289
H	London	4.7	21	481	548
J	South East	3.1	10	349	415
K	South West	1.3	6	449	516

Notes:
1. Three month vacancy information is as at 31 March 2003.
2. Three month vacancies are vacancies which Trusts are actively trying to fill, which had lasted for three months or more (whole-time equivalents).
3. Three month vacancy rates are three month vacancies expressed as a percentage of three month vacancies plus staff in post.
4. Three month vacancy rates are calculated using staff in post from the Vacancy Survey, March 2003.
5. Percentages are rounded to one decimal place.
6. Staff in post data is from the Non-Medical Workforce Census, September 2002

Sources:
Department of Health Vacancies Survey, March 2003.
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census, September 2002.

IT Systems

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate his Department has made of the cost of implementing the National Programme for IT in strategic health authorities. [174107]

Mr. Hutton: The contracts let by the national programme for information technology amount to a cost of £6.2 billion over 10 years. The £2.3 billion allocated in the 2002 spending review will implement core services across all trusts and general practitioner practices, including electronic booking, electronic transfer of prescriptions, a basic national health service care records service and the new national network.

Strategic health authorities are the planning and performance monitoring bodies for the NHS and as such will not incur direct implementation costs for the key applications and systems that will be delivered in trusts and general practitioner practices. The local service providers are currently working with NHS trusts to develop local implementation plans. These will help to profile the NHS effort and resource, for example, training costs over the implementation period.

Lung Cancer Treatment

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what measures he is taking to increase the number of *(a)* oncologists, *(b)* respiratory consultants, *(c)* radiographers, *(d)* thoracic surgeons and *(e)* nurses specialising in lung cancer within the NHS; [177878]

(2) how many *(a)* oncologists, *(b)* respiratory consultants, *(c)* radiographers, *(d)* thoracic surgeons and *(e)* nurses in the NHS specialise in lung cancer. [177879]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 10 June 2004]:* The Department does not collect numbers of oncologists, respiratory consultants, radiographers, thoracic surgeons or nurses in the national health service who specialise in lung cancer.

We are implementing a range of measures to recruit more healthcare professionals into the NHS. These include improving pay and conditions, encouraging the NHS to become a better, more flexible and diverse employer, increasing training, investing in childcare and continuing professional development, attracting back returners and running national, international and local recruitment campaigns.

The table shows the general increase in each specific staff group since September 1997. It is for trusts to determine staffing configurations for the treatment of lung cancer at a local level.

Staff group	*September 1997*	*September 2003*	*Increase over the six year period*	
			Number	*Percentage*
Clinical oncology consultants	287	[1]358	71	25
Respiratory medicine consultants	309	[1]570	261	84
Radiographers (therapeutic and diagnostic)	11,771	13,344	1,573	13
Cardiothoracic surgeons	156	[1]217	61	39
Nurses	318,856	386,359	67,503	21

[1] December 2003 data.

Medical Errors (London)

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients have died or been injured as a result of errors in medical treatment in NHS hospitals in the Greater London area in each of the last three years. [177825]

Mr. Hutton: Information is not available in the format requested. Information is collected on the number of patients injured or fatally injured as a result of errors in medical treatment and where an initial inquiry has been made or a claim for negligence has been received, in national health service hospitals within the five London strategic health authorities (SHAs) and is shown in the tables.

Patients injured as a result of errors in medical treatment, where a claim or inquiry was received for negligence, in NHS hospitals in the five London SHAs

	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Numbers injured and a claim received	775	921	625
Numbers injured and initial inquiry made but no claim received	48	99	241
Total number of incidents queried and claims received	823	1,020	866

Number of patients fatally injured as a result of errors in medical treatment, where a claim or inquiry was received for negligence, in NHS hospitals in the five London SHAs

	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Number fatally injured and a claim received	92	113	75
Number fatally injured and initial inquiry made but no claim received	5	9	27
Total number of incidents queried and claims received for fatalities	97	122	102

Mental Illness

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what audit he has made of the compliance of mental health services trusts with their obligations *(a)* to produce integrated care plans for service users with severe mental illness, *(b)* to ensure that service users have a written care plan and *(c)* to establish assertive outreach for those at risk of losing contact with services. [177010]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The national service framework for mental health states that all service users on the care programme approach should have a copy of their written care plan.

Data collected in 2002–03 to monitor this model of best practice indicated that 77 per cent. of patients on enhanced care programme approach had a copy of their written care plan—104,458 out of 135,699 nationally. Data for 2003–04 has not yet been fully validated.

Mental health trusts are also assessed by the Healthcare Commission using a performance indicator on the implementation of comprehensive care programme approach systems and another one on the numbers of people on enhanced care programme approach with their own care plans.

The Department monitors trusts' performance with establishing assertive outreach teams through local delivery plan returns which show 273 teams providing assertive outreach services to 12,469 people in the fourth quarter of 2003–04.

Microwaves

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research his Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated to ascertain whether there is leakage of *(a)* dioxins, *(b)* carcinogens and *(c)* xenoestrogens when microwaving food in plastic containers. [177480]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Government's research programme into the migration of substances from food contact materials and articles in the specific area of plastic containers used in microwave ovens has included work to establish methodologies for determining such migration; and to establish actual migration of some specific substances within the groups of substances in question.

Details of this research has been placed in the Library. Further information is available on the Food Standards Agency website at www.foodstandards.gov.uk/safety/foodpackaging.

Mixed-Sex Wards (London)

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the hospitals in the Greater London area which use mixed-sex wards. [177826]

Mr. Hutton: The information is not available in the format requested. The Department does not collect information on the number of either single sex or mixed sex wards in use in national health service hospitals.

Guidance issued to NHS trusts on the achievement of the Department's single sex accommodation objectives made it clear that a variety of ward layouts and designs can be used to deliver separate sleeping accommodation, including the use of single sex wards, or combinations of single sex bays and individual rooms. Single sex bays, together with increasing numbers of single rooms, are common features of modern hospital design both here and abroad and can provide acceptable levels of privacy and dignity.

Multi-disciplinary Teams

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what training is provided for NHS staff on how to work effectively in multi-disciplinary teams. [177880]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 10 June 2004]:* We are committed to working with partners in education, statutory and professional bodies to develop programmes of inter-professional and common learning through which different health and social care professionals can learn together and from each other. There are a number of current successful programmes in undergraduate and pre-registration education and for qualified staff, which are designed to help national health service staff work effectively in multi-disciplinary teams.

NHS Treatment Statistics

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many out-patients were treated in the NHS in England in each year from 1991 to 2003. [178888]

Mr. Hutton: The following table shows the first, subsequent and total out-patient attendances in the national health service in England for the years 1991–92 to 2002–03.

	First attendances	*Subsequent attendances*	*Total attendances*
1991–92	8,941,526	27,952,184	36,893,710
1992–93	9,342,280	28,184,758	37,527,038
1993–94	9,680,593	28,519,690	38,200,283
1994–95	10,362,877	28,942,923	39,305,800
1995–96	10,989,334	29,128,357	40,117,691
1996–97	11,294,069	29,578,700	40,872,769
1997–98	11,529,432	30,105,837	41,635,269
1998–99	11,777,780	30,376,617	42,154,397
1999–2000	12,136,405	30,904,294	43,040,699
2000–01	12,466,233	31,103,107	43,569,340
2001–02	12,713,988	31,294,374	44,008,362
2002–03	13,032,192	31,565,368	44,597,560

Source:
Department of Health form KH09.

Nurses' Pay (London)

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate the average weekly earnings of a qualified nurse working in a hospital in the Greater London area. [177827]

Mr. Hutton: The information necessary to make an estimate is not collected centrally.

Nursing Homes

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the decision by the Office of Fair Trading not to include the impact of local authorities' purchasing power on the financial viability of nursing homes in its investigation into nursing homes. [178140]

Dr. Ladyman: The Office of Fair Trading (OFT) operates independently from Government under clear terms of reference and associated powers. It is for the OFT and its board to decide what it will and will not investigate.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he will reply to question reference 176394 tabled by the hon. Member for Billericay. [178860]

Mr. Hutton: I replied to the hon. Member today.

Primary Care Trust Funding

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average sum allocated to primary care trusts in England *(a)* per unweighted head of population and *(b)* per weighted head of population was in (i) 2003–04 and (ii) 2004–05. [178182]

Mr. Hutton: The average sum allocated to primary care trusts in England per head of population, weighted and unweighted, was 916 for 2003–04 and 1,003 for 2004–05.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will place in the Library the funding allocations *(a)* per unweighted head of population and *(b)* per weighted head of population for 2004–05 for each primary care trust in England. [178183]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Radiographers

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* headcount and *(b)* whole-time equivalent (i) diagnostic and (ii) therapeutic radiographers have been employed by the NHS in each year since 1997, broken down by (A) region, (B) strategic health authority and (C) NHS trust. [176751]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested has been placed in the Library. Between September 1997 and 2003, the number of radiographers employed in the national health service has increased by 1,573, or 13 per cent.

NHS hospital and community health services: Qualified diagnostic radiographers in England by Government office region, Strategic health authority area and organisation as at 30 September each specified year

Whole-time equivalent

			1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
	England total		*8,626*	*8,860*	*9,009*	*9,169*	*9,264*	*9,489*	*9,642*
A	*North East total*		*481*	*496*	*509*	*521*	*528*	*547*	*579*
009	*Northumberland, Tyne and Wear SHA total*		*268*	*281*	*291*	*291*	*289*	*302*	*327*
	Cheviot and Wansbeck NHS Trust	RLK	22	—	—	—	—	—	—
	City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Trust	RLN	50	55	51	56	53	51	55
	Freeman Group of Hospitals NHS Trust	RAB	32	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Gateshead Health NHS Trust	RR7	—	41	43	44	40	43	57
	Gateshead Hospitals NHS Trust	RE2	39	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Newcastle City Health NHS Trust	RNM	9	10	—	—	—	—	—
	Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Trust	RTD	—	96	123	119	121	125	136
	North Tyneside Health Care NHS Trust	RLC	23	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Northumbria Healthcare NHS Trust	RTF	—	58	51	48	50	56	52
	Royal Victoria Infirmary NHS Trust	RCK	72	—	—	—	—	—	—
	South Tyneside Healthcare NHS Trust	RE9	22	22	23	24	26	28	27

NHS hospital and community health services: Qualified diagnostic radiographers in England by Government office region, Strategic health authority area and organisation as at 30 September each specified year

Whole-time equivalent

			1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Q10	*County Durham and Tees Valley SHA total*		*213*	*215*	*218*	*230*	*239*	*246*	*252*
	Bishop Auckland Hospitals NHS Trust	RLA	22	—	—	—	—	—	—
	County Durham And Darlington Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	RXP	—	—	—	—	—	—	80
	Darlington Memorial Hospital NHS Trust	RLB	22	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Hartlepool and East Durham NHS Trust	RRY	25	26	—	—	—	—	—
	North Durham Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	RLE	29	—	—	—	—	—	—
	North Durham Healthcare NHS Trust	RR9	—	27	29	33	33	31	—
	North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust	RVW	—	—	58	60	63	62	67
	North Tees Health NHS Trust	RCH	32	33	—	—	—	—	—
	Northallerton Health Services NHS Trust	RCA	14	14	15	16	18	—	—
	South Durham Healthcare NHS Trust	RTA	—	43	45	47	48	50	—
	South Tees Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	RCJ	69	73	71	75	77	—	—
	South Tees Hospitals NHS Trust	RTR	—	—	—	—	—	102	105

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* headcount and *(b)* whole-time equivalent NHS vacancies there were for (i) diagnostic and (ii) therapeutic radiographers in each year since 1997 (A) in total and (B) broken down by positions vacant for (1) 0–3 months, (2) 3–6 months, (3) 6–9 months, (4) 9–12 months, (5) 12–15 months, (6) 15–18 months and (7) over 18 months. [176753]

Mr. Hutton: The only information held centrally on vacancies is numbers of whole-time equivalent vacancies lasting three months or more. Information on the number of whole-time equivalent radiographer vacancies lasting three months or more since 1999, the first year vacancy information was collected centrally, are shown in the table.

Department of Health Vacancies Survey, March each specified year—vacancies in England for qualified radiography staff—

	Three month vacancy rates, numbers and staff-in-post
1999[1]	
Radiographers	
March 1999	
Three month vacancy rate (%)	1.3
Three month vacancy (number)	131
September 1998	
Staff-in-post (whole-time equivalent)	10,189
Staff-in-post (headcount)	12,114
2000	
Radiographers	
March 2000	
Three month vacancy rate (%)	3.6
Three month vacancy (number)	332
September 1999	
Staff-in-post (whole-time equivalent)	9,005
Staff-in-post (headcount)	10,835
Therapeutic radiographers	
March 2000	
Three month vacancy rate (%)	7.1
Three month vacancy (number)	103
September 1999	
Staff-in-post (whole-time equivalent)	1,358
Staff-in-post (headcount)	1,491
2001	
Diagnostic radiographers	
March 2001	
Three month vacancy rate (%)	4.4
Three month vacancy (number)	420

Department of Health Vacancies Survey, March each specified year—vacancies in England for qualified radiography staff—

	Three month vacancy rates, numbers and staff-in-post
September 2000	
Staff-in-post (whole-time equivalent)	9,165
Staff-in-post (headcount)	11,032
Therapeutic radiographers	
March 2001	
Three month vacancy rate (%)	8.0
Three month vacancy (number)	114
September 2000	
Staff-in-post (whole-time equivalent)	1,309
Staff-in-post (headcount)	1,453
2002	
Diagnostic radiographers	
March 2002	
Three month vacancy rate (%)	5.5
Three month vacancy (number)	531
September 2001	
Staff-in-post (whole-time equivalent)	9,260
Staff-in-post (headcount)	11,158
Therapeutic radiographers	
March 2002	
Three month vacancy rate (%)	8.8
Three month vacancy (number)	134
September 2001	
Staff-in-post (whole-time equivalent)	1,391
Staff-in-post (headcount)	1,543
2003	
Diagnostic radiographers	
March 2003	
Three month vacancy rate (%)	6.1
Three month vacancy (number)	599
September 2002	
Staff-in-post (whole-time equivalent)	9,489
Staff-in-post (headcount)	11,489
Therapeutic radiographers	
March 2003	
Three month vacancy rate (%)	10.7
Three month vacancy (number)	169
September 2002	
Staff-in-post (whole-time equivalent)	1,374
Staff-in-post (headcount)	1,542

[1] 1999 vacancy survey is unable to split between diagnostic and therapeutic radiography staff.

Three month vacancy notes:
1. Three month vacancy information is as at 31 March each specified year.
2. Three month vacancies are vacancies which Trusts are actively trying to fill, which had lasted for three months or more (whole-time equivalents).
3. Three month Vacancy Rates are three month vacancies expressed as a percentage of three month vacancies plus staff-in-post.
4. For 2002 and 2003 three month Vacancy Rates are calculated using staff-in-post from the Vacancy Survey.
5. For earlier years three month vacancy rates are calculated using staff-in-post from the non-medical workforce census the previous September.
6. Percentages are rounded to one decimal place.
7. Figures for 1999–2002 exclude health authority staff.
Staff-in-post notes:
1. Staff-in-post data is from the Non-Medical Workforce Census, September each specified year.
General notes:
1. Vacancy and staff-in-post numbers are rounded to the nearest whole number.
2. Calculating the vacancy rates using the above data may not equal the actual vacancy rates.
3. Due to rounding, totals may not equal the sum of component parts.
Sources:
Department of Health Vacancies Survey, March each specified year.
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census, September each specified year.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 221W, on radiographers, what action his Department is taking towards developing an attractive career path for radiography staff. [176755]

Mr. Hutton: The national radiography recruitment and retention strategy will encourage the national roll-out of a new career escalator model for radiographers, building on the knowledge and skills framework of 'Agenda for Change'. This will enable individuals to step on or step off the escalator during their careers, until they reach a level which is appropriate for them and their service. There will be opportunities to practice from assistant right through to consultant practitioner level. With the implementation of the 'Improving Working Lives' standard, there is greater opportunity for radiographers to work flexibly, access childcare and still extend and progress their roles.

Waiting Lists/Times

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance he has issued to *(a)* strategic health authorities and *(b)* acute trusts in respect of waiting times for (i) MRI scans and (ii) nerve conduction tests. [177605]

Mr. Hutton: Data on waiting times for diagnostic tests, including magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans and nerve conduction studies are not collected centrally.

However, the Government are committed to improving access to diagnostic services and the Department is working in partnership with strategic health authorities (SHA) and other stakeholders to secure a more responsive service. Each SHA is responsible for developing and implementing local improvement programmes for diagnostic services and to monitor progress against any locally agreed objectives.

TRANSPORT

"Salvage and Intervention"

Mrs. Lawrence: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps the Government have taken to implement Recommendation 7 in the report of Lord Donaldson's review, Salvage and Intervention and their Command and Control, published in 1999. [178098]

Mr. Jamieson: This recommendation concerns amending the Water Resources Act 1991, responsibility of which is a matter for the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. However I have agreed with the Minister for the Environment (Mr. Morley) that my Department will take this recommendation forward and my officials are currently investigating using a Regulatory Reform Order to do this.

Air Passengers' Health

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he has taken to implement the recommendations of the European Civil Aviation Conference Working Group on Air Passenger Health Issues; and if he will make a statement. [177994]

Mr. McNulty: The European Civil Aviation Conference Working Group on Air Passenger Health Issues has prepared a manual on health issues, the first draft of which Directors General approved at their meeting on 17 March 2004. A number of the issues raised will need to be addressed at a European level. The UK inter-departmental Aviation Health Working Group will discuss the remaining issues at its meeting on 10 June in order to determine how to take forward the recommendations.

Aircraft Medical Emergency Kits

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what guidance he has given to UK airlines on carrying a full medical emergency kit on all flights. [177993]

Mr. McNulty: UK airlines are required to meet the Joint Aviation Requirements—Operations (JAR-OPS) 1.755 on emergency medical kits. An operator must ensure that an aeroplane with more than 30 seats and where the planned route is more than 60 minutes flying time from an aerodrome at which qualified medical assistance could be expected to be available, is equipped with an emergency medical kit. The items that should be included in the emergency medical kit are also specified.

Bus Services (Rochdale)

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many rural bus services in the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale are supported by rural bus grants. [178560]

Mr. McNulty: Rural Bus Subsidy Grant (RBSG) is paid to local transport authorities, in the case of Rochdale this is the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive (PTE). It is for the authority, to decide which services should be supported with the grant. We understand from the PTE that one bus service in Rochdale is provided by RBSG.

Crime (Public Transport)

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many fatalities have resulted from crimes on *(a)* railways and *(b)* buses in each year since 1997, broken down by type of crime. [175463]

Mr. McNulty: The British Transport Police (BTP) have provided the following information on fatalities which have resulted from crimes recorded on the railways since 1999; information is not readily available for earlier than 1999.

Offence	*Fatalities*
1999	
Murder	3
Manslaughter	3
2000	
Murder	3
Manslaughter	2
Death by dangerous driving	1
2001	
Murder	2
Manslaughter	2
2002	
Murder	4
Manslaughter	3
2003	
Murder	0
Manslaughter	[1]3
2004[2]	
Murder	2
Manslaughter	5

[1] In addition the 43 fatalities from Potters Bar, Ladbroke Grove and Hatfield were recorded in this year.
[2] January to March.

No data are held centrally on the number of fatalities resulting from crimes on buses broken down by type of crime.

Cycling

Mr. Greenway: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what advice is given by his Department to local authorities about the advisability of cycling on footpaths. [178310]

Mr. Jamieson: Cyclists have no right to cycle on footpaths and it is illegal to cycle on the footway (the pavement adjacent to the carriageway).

Procedures do however exist in the Highways Act 1980 to convert footways to cycle tracks and in the Cycle Tracks Act 1984 to convert footpaths to cycle tracks.

The decision to convert a footpath or footway to a cycle track is for individual local highway authorities to determine after careful consideration of all the issues. The Department has issued advice on the design and criteria for shared use facilities in Local Transport Note 2/86 "Shared Use by Cyclists and Pedestrians" and, with our partners, in "Cycle-friendly infrastructure" available from the Institution of Highways and Transportation. We are also currently consulting on updated advice in a draft Local Transport Note on "Adjacent and Shared Use Facilities for Cyclists and Pedestrians".

Shared use facilities can have a role to play in providing improved facilities for cyclists but in the main they are best suited to lightly trafficked pedestrian areas, to links in cycle routes or where facilities for cyclists cannot be provided on the road. The conversion of footways and footpaths should not be introduced at the expense of pedestrians and should not be seen as area wide solution to providing improved facilities for cyclists. Local highway authorities should always consult widely on any such proposals at an early stage.

Electric Cars

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many recharging points for electric cars there are in *(a)* car parks and *(b)* on the street in (i) the UK, (ii) Kirklees, (iii) west Yorkshire and (iv) London. [178104]

Mr. Jamieson: According to information from the Energy Saving Trust, there are 16 car park recharging points in London but at present no on street charging points. Across the rest of the UK, there are no public recharging facilities although there are a number of private charge points for commercial and city council fleet vehicles.

Flight Time Limitations

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what his policy is regarding the proposed subparts of JAR-OPS parts 1 & 3 on Flight and Duty Time Limitations and Rest Requirements (Subpart Q) contained within the proposals now being considered by the European Council of Ministers on flight time limitations in Europe; [177610]

(2) what representations he has made to the European Council of Ministers regarding the proposals for flight time limitations in Europe; [177611]

(3) what representations he has received from the Civil Aviation Authority regarding the proposed flight time limitations; and what assessment he has made of the proposals before the European Council of Ministers. [177612]

Mr. McNulty: JAR-OPS 1 and 3 do not contain any requirements on flight and duty time limits as the Joint Aviation Authorities were unable to agree requirements when they were adopted in 1996. The draft Regulation currently under consideration transposes JAR-OPS 1 into Community law, together with flight and duty time requirements proposed by the European Parliament in September 2002.

We recognise the need for harmonised flight and duty limits to ensure a high level of safety and a level playing field in the single aviation market. We can therefore support the proposal provided that it achieves an acceptable level of safety. The Civil Aviation Authority has reviewed the proposal and advises that while the proposal in its original form was unacceptable, with a number of relatively small amendments it could form an acceptable baseline European flight time limitation requirement, supported by additional requirements in

each member state. We have subsequently worked with our European colleagues to agree suitable amendments to the proposal. The CAA is satisfied that, the current text of the proposal taken as a whole will allow it to ensure an acceptable level of safety for UK airlines.

Greenaway Review

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to respond to the Greenaway review into the motor insurance industry. [177441]

Mr. Jamieson: We are currently studying Professor Greenaway's report on uninsured driving and his recommendations. We will be publishing the report together with the Government response as soon as possible.

Heavy Goods Vehicles

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) if he will make a statement on the Government's policy towards the implementation of UN/ECE 48 and UN/ECE 104 with regard to conspicuity marking on heavy goods vehicles; [178456]

(2) what discussions he has had with the heavy goods vehicle industry on the introduction of conspicuity marking. [178457]

Mr. Jamieson: Conspicuity markings conforming to UNECE Regulation 104 are now an optional requirement for vehicles approved to UNECE Regulation 48. Fitment is already permitted in the UK provided they comply with the colour requirements but, as they are optional in UNECE 48, the Government could not unilaterally mandate them.

A German proposal has been made to the UNECE working party on Lighting and Signalling to mandate UNECE 104 tape in UNECE 48 for all new vehicles over 12 tonnes. The Department of Transport will need to weigh up the road safety benefits and the costs before reaching a view on the proposal.

A current European Commission study is investigating the costs and benefits of fitting the tape to new and existing heavy vehicles. The Department will also be commissioning research to provide an updated cost-benefit analysis for the UK.

Representations have been received from both the Freight Transport Association and the Road Haulage Association.

Local Transport Plan

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much public funding has been spent in Crosby from the Local Transport Plan. [177945]

Mr. McNulty: The borough of Sefton forms part of the Merseyside joint Local Transport Plan (LTP) area. £28 million of the total Merseyside LTP funding allocated since 2000 went directly to Sefton MBC. An unspecified proportion of the £82 million allocated to Merseytravel over the same period has been or will be spent on transport improvements in Sefton.

Decisions on how much of this funding is spent in Crosby are a matter for the authorities concerned.

North London Line

Jon Cruddas: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will publish a copy of the joint Strategic Rail Authority/Transport for London/Docklands Light Railway study assessing options for future use of the North London Line between Canning Town and Stratford. [176287]

Mr. McNulty: This report was commissioned by the Strategic Rail Authority and Transport for London and remains incomplete. Some further work is being done and the joint sponsors will consider publication when this is complete.

Rail Services (Rochdale)

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the effect of investment in railway improvements over the next 10 years upon residents of the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale. [178561]

Mr. McNulty: Residents of Rochdale will benefit from the new TransPennine Express franchise, which commenced in February. The franchise secures investment of around £260 million, which will include the introduction of a new fleet of 100 mph diesel trains leading to increased capacity, improved service quality and performance across the region. A new Northern franchise, which will include local and regional services through Rochdale, has been tendered competitively. Work continues on the West Coast Main Line upgrade, which will see a reduction in journey times on services to/from the North West and an increase in service frequency.

Railways (Investment)

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the total private sector investment in the rail industry that has been indirectly funded by the public sector through franchise payments and access charges has been in each financial year since 1996–97. [177210]

Mr. McNulty: Details of annual levels of rail investment and subsidy are set out in Tables 5.1 and 5.2 of the September 2003 edition of the Strategic Rail Authority's quarterly statistics bulletin "National Rail Trends", copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

All investment recorded in Table 5.2, for each year since 1996–97, is private sector investment, but the investment funded by direct grants to Railtrack, Network Rail and London and Continental Railways in 2001–02 and 2002–03 was directly funded by the public sector. The amount of investment funded indirectly by the public sector cannot be accurately assessed because, for example, some access charges are paid by unsubsidised train operators.

Rolling Stock

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many new rail rolling stock vehicles have been ordered since 1997; and of these, how many have been *(a)* wholly manufactured in the UK and *(b)* wholly manufactured abroad. [177098]

Mr. McNulty: It is rare for railway rolling stock to be built wholly in a single country using only components also manufactured wholly within that country. However, of the 4,433 passenger-carrying railway vehicles ordered since 1997, 3,332 (75 per cent.) have been or are being built by UK-based manufacturers. All the remaining 1,101 vehicles are likely to incorporate at least some UK-manufactured components.

Tractor Drivers

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what class of driving licence is required by tractor drivers who are *(a)* contractors or their employees and *(b)* farm workers. [178094]

Mr. Jamieson: The category of entitlement required of tractor drivers is determined by the nature of the work for which the vehicle is being used.

Category F entitlement covers farm workers driving tractors mainly off road and in connection with agricultural or forestry work. If tractors are driven solely off road on private farmland no driving licence is required.

If a tractor is used for any other purpose and is driven primarily on the road, depending on its weight, category B (car), category C1 (medium goods vehicle) or category C (large goods vehicle) entitlement is required. More detailed information is provided in leaflet D100, available from post offices and Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) local offices.

Transport (South-east Hampshire)

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what studies are under way to identify transport problems and solutions in south east Hampshire; and what their completion dates are. [177282]

Mr. McNulty: Consultants have recently completed a scoping study to consider the strategic role of the A34 transport corridor from south Hampshire to the Midlands. The final report was published on 14 April and copies are available on the Government Office for the South East website www.go-se.gov.uk.

As part of the work associated with the development of the South East Plan local authorities have completed an initial piece of work aimed at identifying issues, including transport, that may need to be addressed on a sub-regional basis within south east Hampshire. This work was commissioned by the South East England Regional Assembly.

Hampshire county council, as the local highway authority, will be responsible for other more local transport studies.

West Coast Mainline

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will give a commitment that full local services, of at least the same frequency as existed in the winter 2003–04 timetable, will be reinstated upon the West Coast mainline by May 2005. [177710]

Mr. McNulty: The Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) intends that the timetables for local services on the West Coast Main Line will be restored when the West Coast Route Modernisation works are completed and when driver training and rolling stock enhancements for Central Trains services are completed. This is currently estimated to be in May 2005. The level of service will be substantially that in the winter 2003–04 timetable but the SRA will be discussing with stakeholders changes to these timetables to reflect developments in travel patterns.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Cattle Diseases

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many cattle tested positive for *(a)* brucellosis and *(b)* tuberculosis in Northern Ireland in 2003. [R] [178386]

Mr. Pearson: The information is as follows.

(a) In 2003, a total of 743 cattle tested positive for brucellosis in Northern Ireland.

(b) In 2003, a total of 16,066 cattle tested positive for tuberculosis in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much compensation was paid to farmers for cattle removed from farms in Northern Ireland due to *(a)* brucellosis control and *(b)* tuberculosis control in 2003. [R] [178387]

Mr. Pearson: The information is as follows.

(a) In 2003, compensation payments issued to farmers for cattle removed from farms in Northern Ireland due to brucellosis totalled £9.2 million.

(b) In 2003, compensation payments issued to farmers for cattle removed from farms in Northern Ireland due to tuberculosis totalled £16.7 million.

Flags

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what flags his Department has directed should be flown from police stations in Northern Ireland; and on what designated days. [178402]

Mr. Pearson: The Police Emblems and Flags Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2002 set out what flags may be flown from police stations. A copy of the Regulations is available in the Library of the House.

It is for the Chief Constable to decide when the service flag may be flown. I am given to understand that the flag is flown daily only at PSNI Headquarters Brooklyn and PSNI Training Centre Garnerville. Requests for the use of the service flag for any other reason or purpose including use at or on any other part of the PSNI estate is decided on an individual basis by the Chief Constable's Office.

Long Service Medals

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the *(a)* venue, *(b)* seniority of presenting officers and *(c)* arrangements for accompanying families are for (i) regular officers and (ii) full-time reserve officers receiving Police Service of Northern Ireland long service medals. [178233]

Mr. Pearson: All presentation ceremonies for the Long Service and Good Conduct medal take place at the PSNI Training College at Garnerville.

In respect of regular officers, the Long Service and Good Conduct medals are presented by the Chief Constable or, in his absence, the Deputy Chief Constable. Families are invited at the choice of the recipient.

No medals have been presented to full-time reserve officers since the service name changed in November 2001. The Royal Warrant is currently being revised to allow for the issue of the 'Police Reserve Long Service Medal'. The format of the presentation ceremonies is currently being considered.

Marches/Parades

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what mechanisms are in place to implement security assessments relating to marches and parades and their public order implications; and what advice he has received on this matter. [177190]

Mr. Pearson: My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland is kept informed of the current situation with regard to the forthcoming marching season. There is no information which would suggest this marching season will be significantly different from 2003. The policing of parades is an operational issue which is entirely a matter for the Chief Constable.

Police Service

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many serving Police Service of Northern Ireland officers have relatives with criminal convictions; and for what offence in each case. [176686]

Mr. Pearson: This information is not readily available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Police Widows

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much funding has been made available from the Police Fund to police widows whose husbands were killed on duty prior to 1981 in non-terrorist incidents; and how many individuals this involved. [173597]

Mr. Pearson: In accordance with the scope and recommendations contained in the Steele Report, the Northern Ireland Police Fund does not ordinarily make any direct grant assistance to police widows whose husbands were killed on duty prior to 1981 in non-terrorist incidents.

However, the Steele Report also recommended that the Police Fund should assume the responsibility for the £1,000 that the RUC Benevolent Funds pays annually to each widow who was bereaved prior to 25 November 1982. It has transpired that the list, administered by the RUC Benevolent Fund, includes 11 widows whose husbands were killed on duty in non-terrorist incidents. Thus the Police Fund has indirectly provided funding to these widows totalling £33,000.

While these widows will continue to be eligible to receive their annual award from the RUC Benevolent Fund, I have been advised that the Police Fund are taking steps to recoup this over-payment from the RUC Benevolent Fund.

Real IRA

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether he plans to amend Schedule 2 to the Terrorism Act 2000 in the light of the ruling on 26 May by Mr. Justice Girvan in the case of Mullan and others. [177393]

Mr. Pearson: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for North Down (Lady Hermon) on 8 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 343W.

CABINET OFFICE

Better Regulation Taskforce

Andrew George: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what assessment his Department's Better Regulation Taskforce has made of the cost to *(a)* each of the local authorities in Cornwall and *(b)* the Council of the Isles of Scilly of meeting its obligation of monitoring, inspection, reviews and assessment by, for (i) the Audit Plan, (ii) the Audit Commission, (iii) the Social Services Inspectorate, (iv) Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Schools, (v) Ofsted, (vi) the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate, (vii) Best Value, (viii) comprehensive programme assessments, (ix) the preparation of statutory plans/strategies and (x) other inspections and reviews. [176731]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* The Better Regulation Taskforce does not make an assessment of costs to any individual local authority. Its terms of reference are to advise the Government on action to ensure that regulation and its enforcement meet the principles of good regulation. The taskforce's principles—which the Government fully supports—are proportionality, accountability, consistency, transparency and targeting. More information on these principles and on the work of the taskforce can be found on the Task Force's website at www.brtf.gov.uk

Virginia Bottomley: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what estimate the Better Regulation Taskforce has made of the costs to *(a)* Waverley borough council and *(b)* Surrey county council of their obligations to monitoring, inspection, reviews and assessment required by central Government, their agencies and commissions. [177221]

Mr. Alexander: The Better Regulation Taskforce does not make assessments of costs on any individual local authority. Its terms of reference are to advise the Government on action to ensure that regulation and its enforcement meet the principles of good regulation. The taskforce's principles—which the Government fully support—are proportionality, accountability, consistency, transparency and targeting. More information on these principles and on the work of the taskforce can be found on the task force's website at www.brtf.gov.uk.

Civil Servants

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many civil servants were recruited in each of the last six months. [177194]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* Information on numbers of civil servants recruited in each of the last six months is not held centrally but only by individual Departments and their agencies. This information can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

A breakdown of numbers of civil servants recruited is published annually in Civil Service Statistics. Civil Service Statistics are available in the Library and at www.civil-service.gov.uk/statistics.

Computer File Formats

Mr. Allan: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what his Department's policy is in respect of the computer file formats used for the *(a)* distribution and *(b)* archiving of publicly available documents. [173357]

Mr. Alexander: The Cabinet Office's policy is to meet the Government Web Guidelines. This states that documents be made available on the Internet wherever possible in the following formats:

Hypertext Markup Language
Portable Document Format
Microsoft Word format
Rich Text Format
Plain Text Format
Comma Separated Variable format (for spreadsheets)
Microsoft Excel format (for spreadsheets)

The archiving of Cabinet Office web information has been addressed by the creation of an "archive section". This is now publicly available at http://archive.cabinetoffice.gov.uk and has been created in compliance with the latest version of the Office of the e-Envoy Guidelines. Again, wherever possible, documents are available in the formats listed above.

This archive is an extension of the National Archive's UK Central Government Web Archive initiative which deals with cross-Government "web harvesting". Further details on this can be found at http://www.pro.gov.uk/webarchive/default.htm

Departmental Responsibilities

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what mechanisms exist to distinguish between those matters which are his Department's responsibilities and those which are directly those of the Prime Minister. [176655]

Mr. Alexander: The allocation of ministerial portfolios is a matter for the Prime Minister. Details are set out in the "List of Ministerial Responsibilities", copies of which are available in the Library.

EU Legislation

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office if he will list the occasions when representations have been made to his Department highlighting possible over-implementation of EU legislation, stating in each instance *(a)* the EU directive, *(b)* the individual or organisation making the representation and *(c)* the aspect of over-implementation; and if he will make a statement on the Government's response. [177735]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 10 June 2004]:* The Cabinet Office maintains a close dialogue with a wide range of stakeholders on the handling of European legislation. The Cabinet Office does not hold records of all the discussions that have taken place, which might have included representations on over-implementation.

Representations on the possible over-implementation of individual EU directives would usually have been made to the Department responsible for consulting on and introducing the implementing legislation.

Ministerial Visits

David Davis: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office (1) if he will list the travel costs incurred by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each Minister within his Department for each of the last 10 years; [175650]

(2) how many journeys were made by helicopter by each Minister in his Department and its predecessors in each of the last 10 years; and what the journey length was in each case. [175730]

Mr. Alexander: In respect of overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The Government have also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Libraries of the House. These reports contain information reaching back to 1995–96. Information for earlier years could be obtained only at disproportionate cost and in some cases will no longer be held. Information for 2003–04 will be published in due course

In respect of domestic travel, owing to changes in the accounting system within the Cabinet Office, the information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

All ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, copies of which are available in the Library.

Older People

Mr. Webb: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office for what *(a)* initiatives, *(b)* campaigns and *(c)* advisory bodies relating to older people his Department (i) is responsible and (ii) has provided funding since 2001; and what the cost in each year was for each one. [166239]

Mr. Alexander: As part of its commitment to provide internet access to all the Office of the e-Envoy (OeE) ran a national 'Get Started' campaign in June 2003, to promote internet access among primarily disadvantaged groups including older people. Nearly 37,000 people took advantage of a free internet starter session and the OeE's partnership with Age Concern was particularly effective introducing over 11,000 older people to the internet. £1 million was spent on the Get Started Campaign.

The Directgov site (www.direct.gov.uk), managed by the OeE, brings together information about government services into one place. There is a section with information especially targeted at the over 50s. These include information on health and well-being, employment, pensions and education.

Opinion Research

Norman Lamb: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office if he will place in the Library Government guidelines on the publication and use of opinion research by Government Departments. [177670]

Mr. Alexander: Opinion research is used by Government Departments to assess public response to the policies or services for which the Department is responsible, to develop policy and track delivery. Publication is a matter for individual Departments.

The propriety of this work is covered by the Civil Service Code, and if appropriate, the Guidance on the Work of the Government Information Service which is available in the Library.

Good practice guidance on the technical aspects of social research and evaluation in policy making is currently being prepared and will be published on The Policy Hub (www.policyhub.gov.uk). Some chapters are available already. A full copy of the guidance will be placed in the Library once it is completed. Advice is also available from professional social researchers working in most Departments and where necessary they can consult the Government's Chief Social Researcher.

Parliamentary Questions

John Thurso: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office (1) how many *(a)* ordinary written and *(b)* named day questions his Department received in (i) 2002–03 and (ii) this parliamentary session, broken down by month; [171174]

(2) what proportion of *(a)* ordinary written questions to his Department were answered within five sitting days of tabling, and *(b)* questions for written answer on a named day received a substantive answer on that day in *(a)* the 2002–03 parliamentary session and *(b)* this parliamentary session, broken down by month. [171175]

Mr. Alexander: The information requested is shown in the table.

We endeavour to answer all parliamentary questions within the parliamentary deadlines whenever possible. In addition I refer the hon. Gentleman to a reply given by my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House on 3 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 907W.

Month	*Number due for answer*	*Number answered on day named*	*Percentage answered on day named*
Named day parliamentary questions			
Session 2002–03			
November 2002	11	11	100
December 2002	7	7	100
January 2003	21	14	67
February 2003	5	4	80
March 2003	9	7	78
April 2003	1	1	100
May 2003	2	1	50
June 2003	7	7	100
July 2003	5	5	100
September 2003	—	—	—
October 2003	4	4	100
November 2003	2	1	50
Total	74	62	84
Session 2003–04			
December 2003	3	1	33
January 2004	9	3	33
February 2004	6	6	100
March 2004	12	11	92
April 2004	4	4	100
Total	34	25	74

Month	*Number due for answer*	*Number answered within five working days*	*Percentage answered within five working days*
Ordinary written parliamentary questions			
Session 2002–03			
November 2002	6	6	100
December 2002	30	24	80
January 2003	54	29	54
February 2003	26	14	54
March 2003	50	31	62
April 2003	41	18	44
May 2003	37	9	24
June 2003	31	17	55
July 2003	25	9	36
September 2003	19	13	68
October 2003	19	12	63
November 2003	17	13	76
Total	355	195	55
Session 2003–04			
December 2003	15	11	73
January 2004	43	23	53
February 2004	25	21	84
March 2004	117	90	77
April 2004	31	9	29
Total	231	154	67

Public Service Reform

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many staff have been seconded by Deloitte to advise the Government on public service reform; and on how many contracts arising from that work Deloitte have been designated as a preferred bidder. [175102]

Mr. Alexander: Three staff were seconded from Deloitte to work in public service reform units. Two of these staff were seconded to the Department while working for Arthur Andersen, but subsequently became Deloitte employees, following a corporate take-over in August 2002. No contracts have been awarded to Deloitte as a result of those secondments.

Regulatory Impact Assessments

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what guidelines his Department has issued in relation to Ministers signing off regulatory impact assessments in which the estimated benefits do not outweigh the estimated costs. [178662]

Mr. Alexander: The guidelines on ministerial sign-off of regulatory impact assessments are set out in the Cabinet Office guidance, 'Better Policy Making: A Guide to Regulatory Impact Assessment'. This is available in the Library or on the Cabinet Office's website at www.cabinet-Office.gov.uk/regulation/ria-guidance/

Web Accessibility

Mr. Berry: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what assessment has been made of the percentage of disabled people who will be able to access all Government services electronically by 2005. [177024]

Mr. Alexander: There are currently no figures on the number of disabled people using online services. The Government recognise that basic access to technology is a problem for many disabled people and the importance of not excluding any citizens who wish to use our online services.

A number of initiatives have been established like the 6,000 UK Online centres, with 25 per cent., of these having practical equipment to assist the disabled in getting online.

By implementing the World Wide Web Consortiums (W3C), Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI), Web Content Accessibility Guidelines and standard usability practices, we are endeavouring to make our online services as accessible and usable as currently practical. A copy of the "Web Accessibility Guidelines" has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Berry: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what Government guidelines cover the provision of information in *(a)* British Sign Language and *(b)* Easy Read for people with learning disabilities on Government Departments' and agencies' websites. [177022]

Mr. Alexander: The Government published "Let's make it accessible: Improving Government information for disabled people" in 2001 to help Government Departments and agencies to develop strategies to meet the information needs of their disabled customers. It recommends that Departments and agencies should adopt a good practice approach and that information should be user-friendly and accessible to disabled people. The guidance covers the potential needs of people with a range of impairments, including people who are learning disabled or who are profoundly deaf and use British Sign Language as their first language. It also suggests a range of methods for making information accessible to disabled people.

The Guidelines for UK Government websites (published 2002) and the Quality Framework for UK Government Website Design (published 2003) require government websites to implement the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Accessibility Initiative. We are not aware of a standard meaning for the term Easy Read and no recognised guidance on how to implement it on websites. We are currently reviewing a number of commercial applications that may improve website access to users with learning difficulties.

Mr. Berry: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what plans his Department has to raise awareness in the public and private sectors and in the relevant professional groups of *(a)* the web accessibility needs of disabled people and *(b)* the cost of meeting those needs. [177023]

Mr. Alexander: The Cabinet Office has published the 'Guidelines for UK Government Websites', which provides extensive guidance to government web managers and their contractors on making websites accessible to people with disabilities. Copies are available in the Library. We work closely with external organisations such as the RNIB and RNID.

Following the publication of the Disability Rights Commission report on web accessibility in April 2004 officials have been in discussion with the Commission on the issues of raising awareness and associated costs.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Butler Inquiry

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 17 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 748–49W, on Iraq, how many infringements of section 30, points 2 and 13, of Coalition Provisional Authority memorandum No. 2 (CPA/ORD/30 May 2003/09) have been reported to the CPA; and what action has been taken. [175772]

Mr. Rammell: The Iraqi Correction Service (ICS) has had difficulties in the past with informing family members of the location of criminal detainees. The CPA Senior Advisor for Prisons has facilitated the provision of information to detainees' families. The ICS now requires that prisoners are only accepted with judicial orders that make the prisoner's status clear and then action is taken in accordance with Point 13.

Advisers/Consultants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much his Department and its agencies and non-departmental public bodies spent on external consultants and advisers in each of the last three years. [172433]

Mr. Rammell: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) expenditure on consultants is published annually in our departmental report. The latest available figures are as follows:

£000

	FCO	*British Council*	*Wilton Park Executive Agency*
2000–01	17,900	2,397	4
2001–02	20,100	2,280	4
2002–03	23,700	1,959	12

These figures cover consulting roles e.g. advice on major estate and ICT projects and management consultancy. The increase in 2002–03 over the previous year is accounted for by expenditure on improving the efficiency of our internal service providers.

Our target for these efficiency savings is to reduce direct costs by £7 million over the next two years, and to enable an extra £8 million to £10 million worth of benefits for the FCO more widely from improved procurement from the year 2005–06 onwards.

Colombia

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what information he has received about the role of the Colombian armed forces in the killing of civilians in the communities of Flor Amarillo and Cravo Charo in the Colombian department of Araunca on 21 May 2004; and if he will make a statement. [177693]

Mr. Rammell: We are aware of the allegations of involvement by the Colombian armed forces in these incidents. Our embassy in Bogota has raised our concerns with the Colombian authorities and is pressing them to provide further details. We consistently urge the Colombian authorities to crack down on any reported cases of human rights abuses by the security forces or of collusion with the illegal armed groups.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on human rights abuses in Colombia, with particular reference to the treatment of trade unionists. [178000]

Mr. Rammell: Human rights abuses in Colombia remain unacceptably high, although we have seen a decline in recent years in the numbers of cases. We are very concerned about abuses against all vulnerable groups, including trades unionists. We are engaged in an on-going dialogue with the Government of Colombia, the UN, EU and other international partners and civil society groups on how to improve the human rights situation in Colombia. As I made clear to the House on 23 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 237–41WH, human rights are at the heart of our policy towards Colombia. The issue will be at the top of the agenda for discussion with the Colombians when I visit the country later this month. Rory Murphy of the TUC is due to be with me during that visit.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the level of kidnapping occurring in Colombia; and what discussions he has had with the Colombian authorities on this. [178001]

Mr. Rammell: The level of kidnapping in Colombia, a serious human rights abuse, remains alarmingly and unacceptably high, even though 2003 saw an estimated decrease to 2,200 from 2,986 in 2002. Illegal armed groups and criminal gangs are largely responsible for the kidnaps, presenting a huge challenge for the Colombian security forces. We have worked closely with the Colombian authorities in individual cases of kidnapped British nationals. We support the Colombian Government in the efforts they are making to bring peace and security to the country, while urging them to do so in full observance of international human rights standards.

Cuba

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the impact of US sanctions against Cuba; and what representations he has made to the US Administration about the most effective means of promoting transition to a pluralist democracy in Cuba. [178841]

Mr. Rammell: We do not believe that sanctions offer the most effective means of promoting the transition to a pluralist democracy in Cuba. Our position, which is well understood by the US Administration, is one of constructive engagement and dialogue. This is clearly set out in the EU's Common Position on Cuba which was adopted in 1996, and which has been regularly re-affirmed since.

Deaths (British Citizens)

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list each country in which more than five British citizens were killed or murdered between 1999–2000 and 2001–02. [177606]

Mr. Mullin: The countries in which more than five British Citizens were killed or murdered between 1999–2000 and 2001–02 are as follows:

Country	*Murdered*	*Killed*	*Total*
1999–2000			
Spain	5	91	96
South Africa	5	34	39
USA	5	29	34
Greece	—	22	22
France	2	16	18
Cyprus	1	13	14
Thailand	—	11	11
Turkey	—	9	9
Pakistan	8	—	8
Italy	1	7	8
Australia	—	8	8
Portugal	—	8	8
Germany	2	4	6
Libya	—	5	5
2000–01			
Spain	5	57	62
USA	4	25	29
France	—	26	26
Greece	—	18	18
South Africa	6	10	16
Australia	—	16	16
Cyprus	1	14	15
Thailand	3	8	11
Netherlands	1	9	10
Italy	1	6	7
Ireland	—	6	6
Belgium	—	6	6
Switzerland	—	5	5
Malawi	—	5	5
Austria	1	4	5
Kenya	—	5	5
2001–02			
USA	70	4	74
Spain	3	48	51
France	6	40	46
Netherlands	2	13	15
Cyprus	—	13	13
Australia	—	13	13
South Africa	6	5	11
Turkey	3	8	11
Greece	—	11	11

Country	Murdered	Killed	Total
Belgium	—	9	9
Germany	—	8	8
Italy	—	8	8
India	2	4	6
New Zealand	—	6	6
Kenya	2	3	5
Pakistan	3	2	5
Cuba	—	5	5

Consular statistics are compiled on a yearly basis from April to March.

Iran

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to Iran over the arrests and indiscriminate detention of students in the country. [177717]

Mr. Rammell: Ministers have on a number of occasions discussed with their Iranian counterparts the Iranian authorities' treatment of student demonstrators. EU Foreign Ministers made clear their deep concern at the arrest of several thousand students during the most recent large-scale demonstrations in July 2003. The EU has raised our concerns about individual student detainees in sessions of the EU/Iran human rights dialogue.

Iraq

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what involvement his Department will have in negotiating the use of Iraqi oil assets. [177889]

Mr. Rammell: United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR 1546) of 8 June 2004 reaffirms the right of the Iraqi people to exercise full authority and control over their financial and natural resources from 30 June 2004.

UNSCR 1483 of 22 May 2003 determined that revenue from the sale of Iraq's oil is to be paid into the Development Fund for Iraq (DFI). As determined in UNSCR 1546, upon dissolution of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) on 30 June, funds in the DFI will be disbursed solely at the discretion of the Government of Iraq. DFI funds are to be used in a transparent and equitable manner through the Iraqi budget to benefit the Iraqi people. Before this time, as determined in UNSCR 1483, DFI funds are to be disbursed at the discretion of the CPA, in consultation with the Iraqi Interim Administration.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reference the draft United Nations resolution on Iraq recently proposed by the United Kingdom and the United States makes to paragraph 20 of Resolution 1483; what the implications of this is for *(a)* payments required to be made by Iraq and *(b)* payments required to be made to Kuwait; and if he will make a statement. [178142]

Mr. Rammell: United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1546, adopted unanimously on 8 June 2004, provides for the continuation of the arrangements for the sale, audit, and handling of proceeds to the Development Fund for Iraq (DFI), as established in paragraph 20 of UNSCR 1483.

UNSCR 1546 also provides for the continued payment of five per cent. of Iraq's oil revenues into the United Nations Compensation Commission (UNCC) Fund, as established in paragraph 21 of UNSCR 1483. The conditions for the review of this arrangement remain as in UNSCR 1483, i.e. the current arrangements continue unless an internationally recognised, sovereign Government of Iraq and the Governing Council of the UNCC decide otherwise.

The remaining 95 per cent. of Iraq's oil revenues will continue to be handled through the DFI, and will continue to enjoy the privileges and immunities given to it under UNSCR 1483. The Iraqi Interim Government will have sole control over disbursements from the DFI.

Kuwait, and other states, whose claims against Iraq as a result of the 1990 invasion of Kuwait are accepted by the UNCC, will continue to receive the compensation due to them. This arrangement is subject to change only if the conditions for reviewing the five per cent. transfer of oil revenues to the UNCC—as outlined above—are met.

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the statement of 7 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 31, on Iraq, when he expects to receive the results from the US Administration of their investigation into the deaths at Makr-al-Deel on 18 to 19 May. [178869]

Mr. Rammell: The US investigation into the deaths at Makr-al-Deel continues. We have no indication of when it will be completed.

Korea

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of recent initiatives to open up new road and rail links between North and South Korea; and what contribution the Government are making to this process. [177999]

Mr. Rammell: We welcome constructive efforts by North and South Korea to promote normal communications between the two countries. The opening of road and rail links is a positive development but, as a bilateral issue between those two countries, the Government have made no contribution.

Libya

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will raise at the United Nations the issue of compensation by Libya for victims of their sponsored terrorism in the United Kingdom. [176404]

Mr. Rammell: There are no plans to raise this issue in the United Nations at this time.

Sudan

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the Secretary of State for International Development's letter of

25 May 2004 to the hon. Member for Buckingham, what the response was of the Sudanese Foreign Minister to the representations made to him about the activities of the Janjaweed militias in Darfur. [177385]

Mr. Mullin: My right hon. Friends the Foreign Secretary and the Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn), and I pressed the Sudanese Foreign Minister on the need to rein in the Janjaweed militias when he visited London on 11 May. The Sudanese Foreign Minister agreed, and said that his Government was taking steps to disarm these militias, and to reintegrate them into society. In the longer term he saw a political settlement as the best way to ensure a sustainable solution to the problems in Darfur.

During his visit to Sudan on 6 to 8 June the Secretary of State for International Development pressed the First Vice-President, among others, on the need to rein in the Janjaweed militias.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the Secretary of State for International Development's letter of 25 May 2004 to the hon. Member for Buckingham, if he will list the issues of detail to be determined for progress to be made from the framework agreement between the Sudanese Government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement to the comprehensive peace agreement envisaged for the parties. [177402]

Mr. Mullin: The principal remaining tasks are agreements on ceasefire and security arrangements and on the modalities of implementation of the comprehensive peace agreement.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he expects the Ceasefire Monitoring Commission on Sudan to begin its work. [177403]

Mr. Mullin: The AU-led Ceasefire Commission for Darfur has now started to deploy. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn) met members of this Commission in Darfur on 7 June. We hope that the bulk of this deployment will be completed in the next few weeks. We are currently working to identify a suitable British candidate to join the Ceasefire Commission and have already made a financial contribution of £2 million.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what dialogue the British Government have had with the *(a)* Sur, *(b)* Masalit and *(c)* Zaghawa ethnic groups in the Darfur area of Sudan. [178003]

Mr. Mullin: We try to maintain regular contact with all Darfur groups, and in particular those affected by the conflict. Our embassy in Khartoum have met with members of each of these three groups.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what monitoring the British Government are undertaking of outrages in Darfur, Sudan; [178004]

(2) what British representation there will be in the numbers of military observers pledged to maintain the ceasefire in Darfur, Sudan. [178018]

Mr. Mullin: We see the deployment of the African Union (AU) ceasefire monitoring team as key to improving the security situation and addressing civilian protection. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Development met with military observers from the AU team during his visit to Darfur on 7 June. The AU plan to deploy a full team of 120 observers as quickly as possible. The UK will contribute one of the six observers requested from the EU, and we hope other contributing nations will send their observers soon. The Government of Sudan have promised full support for the monitors, and the UK has provided £2 million to help the AU team to set up. In addition, the UN plan to deploy human rights monitors throughout Darfur with UK financial support.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what further action his Department is taking to help resolve the situation in Sudan through the United Nations and prevent further human rights abuses. [178105]

Mr. Mullin: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave my hon. Friend the Member for Coventry, South (Mr. Jim Cunningham) on 10 June 2004 (UIN 176616).

Surveys

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what surveys of public perceptions of his Department and of its areas of responsibility have taken place over the last 12 months; what the *(a)* title and *(b)* nature of these surveys was; what the findings of each survey were; where these findings have been published; what the cost of such surveys was; and if he will make a statement and place copies of the surveys in the Library. [176942]

Mr. Mullin: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office, together with UK Trade and Investment, the British Council and Visit Britain, jointly commissioned an International Tracking Study, comprising opinion poll research carried out in October 2003 in 15 countries, which benchmarked attitudes towards the UK against key competitors. The costs were shared jointly by the four organisations, and amounted to £64,000 each. We are placing the report of the findings in the Library of the House. In addition to this quantitative survey, we have also conducted some qualitative research (primarily relatively low-cost focus groups) to help target our public diplomacy activities.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Alvis Plc

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when the Office of Fair Trading's investigation into the proposed takeover of Alvis plc by General Dynamics Corporation will be complete; and why the proposed takeover of Alvis plc by General Dynamics Corporation was referred to the Office of Fair Trading. [177779]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I asked the Office of Fair Trading to look at the merger as I believed that the interests of national security may be relevant to the proposed acquisition. I announced on 3 June that I had decided

not to refer to the Competition Commission the proposed acquisition of Alvis plc by General Dynamics Corporation, provided the parties give undertakings to remedy the public security concerns arising in this case. The effect of the undertakings proposed would be that General Dynamics Corporation would be required to take certain measures to enable the UK to maintain its strategic capabilities and protect classified information and the intellectual property rights of the Ministry of Defence.

Business Start-ups

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new businesses have started up in Bootle since 1997. [176526]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 115,000 business start-ups in England and Wales, including 500 in Sefton local authority (which contains the constituency of Bootle), in the fourth quarter of 2003. The latest yearly figures show 465,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2003. This represents a 19 per cent. increase on the year before. There were 2,200 business start-ups in Sefton local authority in 2003. Data for local authorities are not available for before 2003.

DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for Sefton local authority (for which Bootle is a constituency) for the period 1997 to 2002 are shown in the table. Data for 2003 will be available in autumn 2004.

VAT registrations: Sefton local authority 1997 to 2002

	Number
1997	570
1998	585
1999	565
2000	545
2001	580
2002	560

Source:
Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2002, Small Business Service.

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new businesses have started up in Stoke-on-Trent, North since 1997. [177620]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 115,000 business start ups in England and Wales, including 200 in Stoke-on-Trent Unitary Authority and 1,300 in Staffordshire county (which both contain part of the constituency of Stoke-on-Trent, North), in the last quarter of 2003. Data for local authorities are not available for before 2003.

The latest yearly figures show 465,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2003. This represents a 19 per cent. increase on the year before.

DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for Stoke-on-Trent Unitary Authority and Staffordshire Moorlands local authority (which both contain part of the constituency of Stoke-on-Trent, North) are shown in the following table for the period 1997 to 2002. Data for 2003 will be available in autumn 2004.

VAT Registrations

	Stoke-on-Trent Unitary Authority	*Staffordshire Moorlands Local Authority*
1997	470	235
1998	440	235
1999	475	250
2000	475	235
2001	455	205
2002	450	265

Source:
Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2002, Small Business Service, available from www.sbs.gov.uk/analytical/statistics/vatstats.php. The figures are also in the Libraries of the house.

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government have taken to help small businesses in Stoke-on-Trent, North since 1997. [177621]

Nigel Griffiths: The Business Link Operator for Staffordshire, Staffordshire Business Support Ltd., has provided assistance to 1,144 enterprises, in the Stoke-on-Trent, North constituency since 2001. The Small Business Service was set up as an agency of the Department of Trade and Industry in April 2000. Contracts were exchanged with a national network of 45 Business Link Operators (six in the West Midlands) to provide Business Support to small and medium sized enterprises from April 2001. Before this date Government Support to business was provided through Training and Enterprise Councils and the SBS does not have access to this data.

73 of the 1,145 companies received Business Start Up advice, other assistance provided included Workforce Development, Financial advice, Investors In People, Specialist Business Advice, International Trade, and Marketing assistance.

95 of the companies were Female run businesses and 392 were ethnic run businesses.

Since April 2000 the Enterprise Grant scheme (which closed on 31 March 2004) enabled 12 companies to receive offers of grant with a total value of £430,000.

Since 1997 the Research and Development scheme and its predecessor Smart enabled two local companies to receive offers of grant with a total value of £90,000.

Business Support

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many businesses have been helped by the London Development Agency in *(a)* Greater London and *(b)* each London borough in each year from 2000; what the average sum of money received by these businesses is; how many of the businesses helped are still operating; and how many of these businesses have increased their profitability. [177128]

Nigel Griffiths: The London Development Agency's (LDA) performance is assessed by the Mayor and Government against a framework of key targets, including the number of businesses created/attracted/retained/expanded,[1] and the number of business interventions.[2] The following table summarises the total number of businesses created/attracted/retained/expanded as a direct result of LDA activities from March 2001. The LDA did not collect data along these lines in 2000–01. Figures cannot be accurately generated for each London borough, as the businesses assisted are not necessarily based in only one location.

[1] New businesses starting full time operation within the region and sustained for at least 12 months or business retained within the region as a result of direct activity. Expansion refers to an increase in the workforce of at least 5 per cent.

[2] The provision of non-financial support to businesses.

Reporting year	*LDA target*	*Outputs achieved*
2001–02	1,785	2,073
2002–03	990	1,368

The business interventions target was introduced for 2003–04. Performance data for 2003–04 will be published in July 2004 by the GLA and the Department for Trade and Industry.

Because much of the support that the LDA gives to business is indirect and is not in the form of financial subsidy, the LDA does not collect figures on the average sum of money received by businesses.

Apart from the data needed to monitor whether businesses added to the regional economy have been in operation for at least 12 months, the LDA does not collate statistics on the number of businesses it has supported continuing to be in operation, nor on their profitability.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much has been allocated to support businesses in London in each of the last 10 years, broken down by *(a)* sector and *(b)* borough. [177178]

Nigel Griffiths: Information on the allocation of business support is not readily available at a sector and borough level, and could be compiled only at disproportionate cost.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what international research her Department has commissioned concerning state support for business development by sector; and if she will place the results in the Library. [177179]

Nigel Griffiths: In 2001 DTI commissioned a study, 'People as Vectors of Technological Capability in Technology, Knowledge and Skills Transfer Schemes'. The emphasis of the study was on technology transfer and the means by which business could acquire specialist skills and knowledge without the costs and risks of employing specialist staff. It concluded that such knowledge transfer schemes have strong theoretical and empirical support in international practice. Two of DTI's innovation related products are designed to facilitate knowledge transfer.

DTI has recently completed a series of Sector Competitiveness Analyses in the following sectors: construction; electronics; call centres; plastics processing; and retail sectors. Further Sector Competitiveness Analyses are underway in the following sectors: software and computer services; and healthcare equipment. These studies, which have a large economic component, aim to compare the UK sector's labour productivity with that of other countries and to investigate the reasons for differences. The results will be used to inform decisions on the DTIs provision of support for business.

A further study is under way to review the literature relating to policies designed to promote enterprise in developed market economies, particularly the USA, France and Germany. This review will cover both underlying philosophies and strategies and specific policies related to the promotion of enterprise. The research, due to be completed by the end of June will include in depth studies of policy and practice in: US, Sweden, Germany, Australia and Canada plus reviews of specific initiatives in other developed economies.

Copies of all studies will be made available in the Libraries of the House.

Cold Calling

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what measures she is putting in place to tackle cold calling; and if she will make a statement. [178414]

Mr. Timms: The Office of Fair Trading (OFT) published their market study report into Doorstep Selling on 12 May. The report is being carefully considered and any proposed legislative changes will be the subject of thorough consultation.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the scale of cold calling; and if she will make a statement. [178415]

Mr. Timms: The Office of Fair Trading (OFT) have investigated Doorstep Selling as a whole and published their market study report on 12 May. The report includes an estimate that the overall number of bogus trading cases related to cold calling is in the region of 15,000 each year with an average transaction of £2,500.

Crown Post Offices

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) for how long commitments contained in public notices of the proposed transfer of Crown post offices to Primeco that services will not be adversely affected have effect; and what guarantees are written into agreements with Primeco and other companies that services will be unaffected in future years; [177747]

(2) which Crown post offices have been transferred to Primeco in each of the last 12 months; and which are the subject of proposals to transfer to Primeco. [177745]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 9 June 2004]*: This is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. and I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Electricity Generation/Supply

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of likely levels of *(a)* domestic electricity charges and *(b)* transmission charges under British Electricity Trading and Transmission Arrangements. [R] [178319]

Mr. Timms: The DTI has carried out an analysis of the possible impact of the British Electricity Trading and Transmission Arrangements (BETTA) as part of the Energy Bill Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) (www.dti.gov.uk/energy/leg_and_reg/acts/ria2.pdf). Benefits to domestic customers are likely to accrue mainly to those in Scotland. We do not expect any appreciable effect to customers in England and Wales in the short term as BETTA does not substantially change the market in these regions.

The RIA estimated that a combination of increased electricity wholesale competition and a re-allocation in the way transmission charges are calculated could see annual domestic electricity bills in Scotland falling by around £13 per customer, all other things being equal. Customers who switch suppliers could make further gains.

Transmission charges under BETTA have not been finalised and as such all calculations are estimates. The Great Britain System Operator designate, National Grid Company (NGC), produced a recent consultation "GB Transmission Charging: Initial Methodologies" published on 8 April 2004. This sets out two scenarios of what transmission charges might be in 2005–06 following BETTA's planned introduction. This consultation is available at: www.nationalgridinfo.co.uk/betta/gb_consultations.html

NGC will submit final transmission charging proposals to the Industry Regulator, Ofgem, for approval later this year contingent on the SoS designating the relevant licence conditions once legislative powers are available.

Equality

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what practical steps the Government are taking to address issues of equality. [176491]

Jacqui Smith: Since 1997 the Government have worked to increase opportunity and tackle discrimination and disadvantage through a wide range of legislation, policies and programmes. This includes introducing new legislation outlawing discrimination in employment on grounds of sexual orientation, religion and belief (and in due course age); strengthening existing legislation on disability discrimination; strengthening the Race Relations Act including introducing a duty on public bodies to promote race equality; and publication of a draft Disability Discrimination Bill, which will further extend rights and opportunities for disabled people. We are also continuing to improve the workings of the Equal Pay Act and the Sex Discrimination Act, for example, through the introduction of the Equal Pay questionnaire and through action to streamline the complex rules of procedure relating to equal value tribunal cases. Further major steps are in progress or planned.

The White Paper "Fairness for all" published on 12 May 2004 proposes the creation of a single Commission for Equality and Human Rights. This step reflects the first comprehensive review of our statutory equality institutions for quarter of a century and makes clear the Government's determination to place equality and human rights at the heart of society. The CEHR will champion equality and diversity, tackle discrimination robustly, provide support for the full breadth of discrimination legislation and promote a culture of respect for human rights. It will be able to serve all the communities covered by discrimination legislation more effectively than at present, while retaining focus, knowledge and expertise relevant to particular groups.

EU Legislation

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list the occasions when representations have been made to her Department highlighting possible over-implementation of EU legislation, stating in each instance *(a)* the EU directive, *(b)* the individual or organisation making the representation and *(c)* the aspect of over-implementation; and if she will make a statement on the Government's response. [177736]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 10 June 2004]*: The information sought cannot be provided as representations received by the Department in relation to possible over-implementation of EU legislation are not held centrally.

However, the Department seeks to ensure that the principles of better regulation are observed when implementing EU legislation.

EU Social Chapter

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the benefits of the EU Social Chapter for the residents of Wirral, South. [177688]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The residents of Wirral, South have benefited from the EU Social Chapter by having their employment rights extended to include:

the right to parental leave which gives parents the right to 13 weeks unpaid leave at the birth or adoption of a child;

the entitlement of part-time workers to the same pro-rata terms and conditions of employment as full-time workers, thereby removing any discrimination and improving the quality of part-time jobs;

the provision that once a prima facie case has been made in an employment tribunal claim, the burden of proof is placed on the defendant (usually the employer), who will need to demonstrate that sex discrimination has not occurred;

rights under the Fixed Term Work Directive that provide for the fair treatment of fixed term workers and prevent abuse of fixed term contracts;

rights under the European Works Council Directive which requires companies with at least 1,000 employees in total and at least 150 workers in each of the two member states, to establish structures for consulting workers on issues that affect them.

In addition, the Information and Consultation of Employees Directive to be implemented in the UK by March 2005, establishes a right to new minimum standards for workforce communication and involvement in large firms.

Government Websites

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the compliance of Government websites with Web Accessibility Initiative guidelines. [177107]

Mr. Alexander: I have been asked to reply.

The Government have adopted the Web Accessibility Initiative guidelines and encourages compliance through the provision of extensive guidance and good practice. Our publications 'Guidelines for UK Government websites' and the 'Quality Framework for UK government Website Design', are available online www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/e-government/webguidelines. Copies will be placed in the Library. Compliance is the responsibility of individual departments and agencies.

Mains Gas Network

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what plans her Department has to provide assistance and support for the extension of the mains gas network to those areas without access, with particular reference to deprived communities; [178011]

(2) what discussions have been held between her Department and the Treasury to seek funding for the extension of mains gas provision to areas of England not served by the network; and if she will make a statement. [178012]

Mr. Timms: The Department estimates that, based on figures for 2001, around 450,000 vulnerable, fuel poor households lacked access to mains gas, and that around 180,000 of those households might feasibly be connected to the mains gas network. The Department has been considering the possibility of funding for a programme to provide connection to deprived communities without mains gas. The Design and Demonstration Unit, which is based in DTI and designs and develops projects in support of White Paper objectives has completed two pathfinder projects to provide gas connections to deprived communities, and is currently working on a third. It hopes to undertake more projects during 2004–05.

Parental Leave

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many parents in the *(a)* £5,000 to £10,000, *(b)* £10,001 to £15,000, *(c)* £15,001 to £20,000, *(d)* £20,001 to £25,000 and *(e)* £25,001 to £30,000 income brackets have exercised their right to take parental leave in each year since its introduction. [175406]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* Data on the take-up of parental leave disaggregated by income band is not yet available.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many parents of disabled children have taken parental leave in each calendar year since the right to such leave was introduced. [175408]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* Data on the take-up of parental leave by the parents of disabled children is not yet available.

Post Office Closures (London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many post office closures there have been in each London borough in each year since 1997. [177126]

Mr. Timms: I am advised by Post Office Ltd. that data on post office closures by local authority area is not available in the form requested, as the company does not require this data for operational purposes. However, it has produced quarterly statistics on post office closures by Government region/country since March 2000 and the net closure figures for the London region are:

Year to end March 2001—10

Year to end March 2002—16

Year to end March 2003—44 (including 11 under the urban reinvention programme)

Year to end March 2004—155 (including 142 under the urban reinvention programme).

Post Office Reinvention Programme

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions she has had with Post Office Ltd. on the interpretation of European Commission approval of the funds made available for the Post Office Urban Reinvention Programme; and if she will make a statement. [177701]

Mr. Timms: The terms of the compensation funding for the Post Office Urban Reinvention Programme are set out in the October 2002 offer letter between the Department and Post Office Ltd. and reflect fully the terms of the European Commission's approval of the scheme for state aid purposes.

The rationale for the urban reinvention programme, and the context of the European Commission's state aid clearance, is to restore the urban post office network to economic sustainability by reducing its size, while continuing to maintain good levels of accessibility with at least 95 per cent. of the urban population nationally living within one mile of a post office and the majority within half a mile at the end of the programme.

Radio Frequency Identifiers

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to her answer of 12 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 443W, on radio frequency identifiers, if she will assess the potential change in the number of jobs in the retail sector as a result of the implementation of radio frequency identifier devices technology. [177810]

Mr. Timms: Radio frequency identifier device (RFID) technologies are currently deployed in the retail environment for tagging at case or pallet level in distribution and stock control. It does not appear to have had impacts on job numbers. The possible

extension of RFID technology to tagging at item level may have implications for employment and the range of skills and competences required of retail staff. The Department for Trade and Industry will monitor developments through its relationship with the retail sector and the relevant Sector Skills Councils.

Renewable Energy

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what target her Department has set for *(a)* the amount and *(b)* the percentage of electricity the UK should be obtaining from renewable sources by (i) 2004 and (ii) each year to 2010; what revision to the original renewables obligation targets for electricity from renewable sources has been made since it was introduced; what progress has been made to date; and what assessment she has made of whether the targets will be met within the stipulated time. [176741]

Mr. Timms: The information requested is as follows:

(a) The Government have set the target of 10 per cent. of electricity consumption from renewable sources by 2010, but has not set separate targets for each year until that date.

(b) During the first year of Renewables Obligation operation, the UK produced about 1.8 per cent. of its electricity from eligible renewable sources—somewhat below the level of the Renewables Obligation of 3.0 per cent. for that period. However, including all renewables sources, the total UK production from renewables for the same period was slightly over 3.0 per cent.

The Government recently announced that the level of the RO would be increased from 2010 rising to 15.4 per cent. by 2015. This will help long-term investment decisions in renewables.

The targets we have set are achievable, but challenging, since we are starting from a low base. However, we are doing all we can to achieve this target. The Government have established a framework for expansion and expect the industry to demonstrate they can achieve our goals at an acceptable cost.

We expect the main growth between now and 2010 to come from onshore and offshore wind farms.

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the study commissioned by her Department of the actual and potential impact of community benefits schemes on the deployment of renewable energy projects. [177881]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 10 June 2004]:* The Department has commissioned a study of the actual and potential impact of community benefits schemes on the deployment of renewable, especially wind, energy projects. A report is expected later this year.

Secondments

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many UK Trade and Investment international trade advisers went on secondment to the private sector in the last year for which figures are available. [176354]

Ms Hewitt: We have begun encouraging such outward interchanges to the private sector but none has yet taken place. However, over 70 per cent. of UK Trade and Investment's international trade advisers were recruited from the private sector, and already have relevant business experience.

South West Regional Development Agency

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what grants have been distributed by the South West Regional Development Agency since 2002–03, broken down by *(a)* county and *(b)* district. [176743]

Jacqui Smith: South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) does not hold the information on the basis requested. Grant payments are recorded against the themes set out in SWRDA's Corporate Plan 2003–06, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefits

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of the average payment to a recipient of *(a)* incapacity benefit and *(b)* income-based job seeker's allowance. [177965]

Mr. Pond: In November 2003, the average weekly payment of incapacity benefit was £82.84 and the average weekly payment of income-based job seekers allowance was £62.62.

Note:
Figures are subject to sampling variation.

Source:
DWP-IAD Information Centre, 5 per cent. sample

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the *(a)* costs of administering and *(b)* actual benefit expenditure for (i) the state retirement pension, (ii) child benefit, (iii) income support, (iv) minimum income guarantee of pension credit, (v) jobseekers allowance, (vi) disability living allowance and (viii) incapacity benefit in the latest year for which figures are available. [177490]

Malcolm Wicks: The information requested is in the table.

£ million Nominal terms

Benefit	*Administration costs 1998–99*[1]	*Estimated benefit expenditure outturn*
2003–04		
Retirement Pension (including earnings related)	314	46,467
Minimum Income Guarantee of Pension Credit	n/a	4,544
Income Support	581	10,073
Jobseekers Allowance Contribution Based	51	531
Jobseekers Allowance Income Based	330	2,027
Disability Living Allowance	119	7,589
Incapacity Benefit	375	6,715
2002–03[2]		
Child Benefit	125	8,945

[1] The latest figures available for administration costs for the benefits in the table are from the publication, "Social Security Departmental Report: The Government's Expenditure Plans 2000/01–2001/02". Administration costs for main benefits after this date is not currently available in the format requested. The

Department now accounts for its administration and benefit expenditure by Strategic Objective, as set out in its Public Service Agreements (PSA), and by individual Requests for Resources (RfRs), as set out in the Departmental Estimates and Accounts.
[2] This is the latest year for which figures are currently available. Responsibility for child benefit was transferred to Inland Revenue from April 2003.

Community Care Grants

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost of community care grants was in each of the last four years. [177888]

Mr. Pond: The information is in the table.

Community care grant expenditure

£

	Expenditure
2000–01	100.1
2001–02	102.6
2002–03	108
2003–04	117.5

Notes:
1. Figures include expenditure from extra budget allocations for contingency purposes.
2. Figures do not include expenditure recorded clerically.
Source:
DWP Policy, Budget and Management Information System (PBMIS)

Correspondence

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when the right hon. Member for Liverpool, Wavertree will be in a position to reply to the letter from the hon. Member for North East Bedfordshire of 21 April, requesting that she meet a delegation of hon. Members to discuss the Working at Height Directive. [178744]

Jane Kennedy: I have written to the hon. Member today.

Disability Discrimination Bill

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what assessment he has made of the number of people who would be protected from discrimination if the recommendations in paragraphs 79, 88 and 99 of the report of the Joint Committee on the Draft Disability Discrimination Bill were to be accepted; [177653]

(2) when he expects to publish the Disability Discrimination Bill. [177654]

Maria Eagle: We have made no such assessment. We are still considering the recommendations of the Joint Committee on the draft Disability Discrimination Bill, which were published on 27 May 2004. We will respond as soon as possible. The timing of the introduction of the Bill is a matter to be determined by Business Managers in the usual way.

Disability Living Allowance

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people are in receipt of disability living allowance; and, of these, what percentage are only in receipt of the care component. [176734]

Maria Eagle: The total number of disability living allowance recipients as at 30 November 2003 was 2,558,200. 13.2 per cent. of these are in receipt of the care component only.

Note:
Figure taken from a 5 per cent. sample at 30 November 2003 and rounded to the nearest hundred.
From November 2002, the methodology for producing these figures was changed to allow statistics to be published much sooner. This has resulted in a small increase in the reported caseload. This is because some cases which have actually terminated but have not yet been updated on the computer system are now included.

Source:
IAD Information Centre.

Household Incomes

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the change in income resulting from tax and benefit measures was in real terms for the lowest income decile of families in each year since 1997, expressed in each case as a percentage change in relation to 1997 base figures. [175132]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

However, as a result of personal direct tax and benefit measures introduced by this Government since 1997, in 2004–05, households in the bottom tenth of the income distribution will have gained, on average, £1,900 a year in real terms.

Incapacity Benefit

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average weekly payment of incapacity benefit has been in each year since 1997–98. [177552]

Maria Eagle: The information is in the table.

Average weekly amount of incapacity benefit

£

November	*Average weekly amount*
1997	81.07
1998	82.15
1999	82.54
2000	81.73
2001	82.76
2002	82.75
2003	82.84

Note:
Figures exclude 'national insurance credits only' cases.
Source:
DWP Information Centre, 5 per cent. samples.

Income Support

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of women claiming income support. [178228]

Mr. Pond: The number of women claiming income support (as a single person or on behalf of a couple) in Great Britain at November 2003 was 1,393,700. There were an additional 214,000 income support benefit units where there was a male claimant and a female partner.

Notes:
1. Figures are based on a 5 per cent. sample and are therefore subject to sampling variation.
2. Figures have been rounded to the nearest hundred.
3. Excludes pension credit cases.

Lone Parents

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many lone parents in Stoke-on-Trent North have gained work through the New Deal programmes; and if he will make a statement. [177622]

Jane Kennedy: Through the New Deal we have introduced a wide range of initiatives to help lone parents improve their employment prospects by giving them the skills, support and confidence they need to move into work. The New Deal runs alongside other measures which are helping lone parents into work and making work pay for them. These include our National Childcare Strategy; the Lone Parent's Benefit Run-On; the child tax credit and the working tax credit (including the childcare tax credit).

380 lone parents in Stoke-on-Trent North have gained work through the New Deal for Lone Parents since the start of the programme in October 1998. Figures for lone parents who have gained work through other New Deal programmes are not available.

Ministerial Visits

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the travel costs incurred by *(a)* his Department and its predecessors and *(b)* each Minister within his Department, for each of the last 10 years. [175651]

Maria Eagle: In respect of overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The Government have also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Libraries of the House. These report information reaching back to 1995–96. Information for earlier years could be obtained only at disproportionate cost and in some cases will no longer be held. Information for 2003–04 will be published in due course.

Departmental travel costs for the Department and the former Department of Social Security for the last 10 years is not available, however we do have information relating to the last seven years and I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Havant (Mr. Willetts) on 24 May 2004, *Official Report*, Volume 421, column 1470W.

Information relating to individual ministers for this period is not readily available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. All ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many journeys were made by helicopter by each Minister in his Department and its predecessors in each of the last 10 years; and what the journey length was in each case. [175731]

Maria Eagle: In respect of overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The Government have also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Libraries of the House. These report information reaching back to 1995–96. Information for earlier years could be obtained only at disproportionate cost and in some cases will no longer be held. Information for 2003–04 will be published in due course.

Information relating to the use of helicopters by Ministers of this Department, and it's predecessor the Department of Social Security, is not available for the last 10 years, however there has been no use of helicopters, at departmental expense, since 1997.

All ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

Pension Credit

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many *(a)* individuals and *(b)* households he expects to be eligible for pension credit in (i) 2004–05, (ii) 2005–06, (iii) 2006–07 and (iv) 2008–09; [177548]

(2) what his Department's target is for the number of *(a)* individuals and *(b)* households who will be receiving pension credit by (i) 2004–05, (ii) 2005–06, (iii) 2006–07 and (iv) 2007–08. [177549]

Malcolm Wicks: Estimates of levels of eligibility for pension credit to 2008–09 are provided in the table. The Department has set a Public Service Agreement target for at least three million pensioner households, corresponding to around 3.7 million individuals, to be in receipt of pension credit by March 2006 and is on course to achieve this.

Number of households and individuals estimated to be eligible for pension credit, 2004–05 to 2008–09

Million

	Households	*Individuals*
2004–05	3.75	4.85
2005–06	3.85	5.00
2006–07	3.95	5.10
2007–08	4.10	5.35
2008–09	4.25	5.55

Notes:
1. Estimates for private households and individuals are based on Family Resources Survey data for 2002–03 projected forward to reflect changes in taxes, benefit rates and pensioners' incomes.
2. Estimates for pensioners in care homes are based on DWP administrative data on the number of recipients of minimum income guarantee in residential care and nursing homes and on data from Health Departments on the number of local authority supported care home residents.
3. Estimates have been rounded to the nearest 50,000 cases, are subject to a wide margin of error and should be used as broad indications of the likely eligible population only.
4. A pensioner household is defined as single persons aged 60 or over and couples where at least one partner is aged 60 or over. Individuals are single pensioners with eligibility and both partners in a couple with eligibility.

Pensioner Incomes

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average change in household income for pensioners in Stalybridge and Hyde has been since 1997. [177686]

Malcolm Wicks: The information requested is not available.

Pensions

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of average income the state pension represented in each year since 1994. [177409]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not available in the format requested. The information as is available is in the table.

	Percentage of average income
1996–97	35
1997–98	34
1998–99	31
1999–2000	31
2000–01	29
2001–02	30

Notes:
1. State pension figures are derived from a five per cent. sample of DWP administrative data taken at March in each year.
2. Average income for each financial year is median gross weekly individual income taken from Individual Incomes 1996/7–2001/2 published by the Department for Work and Pensions. The Individual Income series used is based on the Family Resources Survey which has been available since 1996.
3. State pension is calculated as the maximum rate of basic state pension plus the average amount of additional state pension in payment for recently retired men aged 65 and women aged 60.
4. The figures have been rounded to the nearest percentage point.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pension schemes have started the winding-up process in each year since 1997; and how many pension scheme members have been affected, broken down by *(a)* pensioners and *(b)* people who had not retired when the winding-up began. [177544]

Malcolm Wicks: The Pensions Schemes Registry, administered by the Occupational Pension Schemes Regulatory Authority (OPRA), holds information on the number of pension schemes which are currently in the winding up process. Figures showing the number of schemes that have entered winding up each year since 1997 and have not yet completed winding up are contained in the table, along with numbers of members in those schemes.

It is not possible to break these figures down by pensioner and pre-retirement numbers, as the registry only provides data on total membership numbers.

Schemes that are winding up

	Number of schemes	*Number of members*
1 April 1997–3 March 1998	120	1,944
1 April 1998–3 March 1999	156	5,143
1 April 1999–3 March 2000	3,921	88,577
1 April 2000–3 March 2001	1,403	52,623
1 April 2001–3 March 2002	1,866	61,639
1 April 2002–3 March 2003	1,460	73,982
1 April 2003–3 March 2004	1,420	48,194
Total	10,346	332,102

Notes:
1. The table does not contain schemes that started winding up in the time period given and have since completed wind up. The Pensions Schemes Registry only records the present status of a scheme so only those winding up at the moment are captured. This is unlikely to bias the figures extensively as the winding up process can take many years to complete, particularly for large firms.
2. A winding up scheme is one which has notified OPRA that it has commenced winding up procedures.
3. Schemes have up to 12 months to notify OPRA of any status change so the data for the current year is provisional.

Special Advisers

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) if he will list the meetings with external *(a)* bodies and *(b)* individuals that his Department's (i) special advisers and (ii) unpaid advisers have attended without Ministers in their official capacity in each year since 1996–97; [174646]

(2) if he will list the attributable letters that his Department's *(a)* special advisers and *(b)* unpaid advisers have written to external (i) bodies and (ii) individuals in their official capacity in each year since 1996–97. [174649]

Maria Eagle: The Department for Work and Pensions was created in June 2001. Information prior to June 2001 refers to the former Department of Social Security. The Code of Conduct for Special Advisers makes clear that special advisers may liaise with outside interest groups on the Minister's behalf. The information requested could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

The Department has no unpaid advisers.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what role his Department's *(a)* special advisers and *(b)* unpaid advisers play in the (i) appraisal, (ii) reward, (iii) discipline and (iv) promotion of permanent civil servants. [174651]

Maria Eagle: The Department for Work and Pensions was created in June 2001. Information prior to June 2001 refers to the former Department of Social Security. In its response to the Ninth Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life, the Government made clear that with the exception of up to three posts in No. 10, special advisers cannot have any role in the appraisal, reward, discipline or promotion of permanent civil servants.

The Department has no unpaid advisers.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list occasions when his Department's *(a)* special advisers and *(b)* unpaid advisers have been responsible for authorising departmental spending since 1997. [174653]

Maria Eagle: The Department for Work and Pensions was created in June 2001. Information prior to June 2001 refers to the former Department of Social Security. No special adviser within the Department has, or has had, any authority to authorise departmental spending.

The Department has no unpaid advisers.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether his Department's *(a)* special advisers and *(b)* unpaid advisers give instructions to permanent civil servants without the explicit authorisation of Ministers. [175020]

Maria Eagle: In its response to the Ninth Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life, the Government made clear that special advisers may, on behalf of their Ministers, convey to officials Ministers' views and work priorities. It is not the case that special advisers in the Department may issue instructions to permanent civil servants.

The Department has no unpaid advisers.

Specialised Disability Fund

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many lone parents in the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale have gained work through the New Deal programme. [178533]

Jane Kennedy: 520 lone parents in the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale have gained work through the New Deal for Lone Parents since the start of the programme in October 1998. Figures for lone parents who have gained work through other New Deal Programmes are not available.

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many women in the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale have benefited from *(a)* the New Deal for Lone Parents and *(b)* the New Deal for Partners since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [178534]

Jane Kennedy: Through the New Deal we have introduced a wide range of initiatives to help individuals improve their employment prospects by giving them the skills, support and confidence they need to move into work. From 12 April we enhanced the New Deal for Partners in order to offer partners taking part in that programme the same level of help and support as our successful New Deal for Lone Parents programme. Also from this April we have started to roll out Work Focused Interviews for Partners, offering greater support to partners of benefit recipients.

920 women have started New Deal for Lone Parents in the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale since the beginning of the programme in October 1998, of whom, 490 have gained a job. Information on the number of women who have benefited from the New Deal for Partners is not available.

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many senior citizens in the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale have benefited from the winter fuel allowance since 1997; and what percentage are *(a)* women and *(b)* of Asian origin. [178542]

Malcolm Wicks: The number of senior citizens in the Rochdale constituency who have benefited from a winter fuel payment in each year since 1999–2000 (including provisional figures for 2003–04) and identified by gender is in the table. Information relating to the 1997–98 and 1998–99 winters and ethnic origin is not available.

	Payments made			
	All	*Men*	*Women*	*Percentage of women*
1999–2000	14,285	5,495	8,785	61.5
2000–01	15,635	6,820	8,810	56.3
2001–02	15,685	6,965	8,720	55.6
2002–03	15,845	7,115	8,730	55.1
2003–04	15,795	7,085	8,710	55.1

Notes:
1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest 5.
2. Please note that the figures for 2003–04 refer only to the main payment run i.e. they do not include the late payment run figures. We estimate that there are approximately 100,000 people in Great Britain paid via late payment runs (0.8 per cent. of all payments). Since most of the payments made in late payment runs are to people who are not receiving another benefit from DWP and whose claims had not been received by the qualifying week, most are to men aged 60.

Source:
IAD Information Centre, 100 per cent. samples.

Sure Start

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many mothers in Stoke-on-Trent North have received the Sure Start maternity grant. [177634]

Mr. Pond: The information is in the tables.

Sure Start maternity grants for area covered by Staffordshire Social Fund District

	Applications	*Awards*
2000–01	2,830	2,498
2001–02	3,502	3,024
2002–03 to October	2,659	2,221

Sure Start Maternity Grants for area covered by Staffordshire Jobcentre Plus District

	Applications	*Awards*
2002–03 from November	2,142	1,648
2003–04	5,504	4,199
2004–05 to May	961	680

Notes:
1. Stoke on Trent North parliamentary constituency was part of the Staffordshire Social Fund District. In November 2002, Staffordshire Social Fund District was combined with parts of Burton Social Fund District to form Staffordshire Jobcentre Plus District. The two areas for which data is given above are different, therefore the data is not comparable.
2. Sure Start maternity grants were introduced on 27 March 2000. There were no applications recorded in the Staffordshire district during 1999–2000
3. Data is given for all applications and awards, irrespective of whether the application was made by the mother or her partner.

Source:
DWP Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System.

Winter Fuel Allowance

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many senior citizens in Stoke-on-Trent North have benefited from the winter fuel allowance since 1997. [177623]

Malcolm Wicks: The number of senior citizens in Stoke-on-Trent North who received a winter fuel payment in each year since 1999–2000 (including

provisional figures for 2003–04) is in the table. Information relating to the 1997–98 and 1998–99 winters is not available.

	Payments
1999–2000	14,525
2000–01	15,950
2001–02	16,101
2002–03	16,065
2003–04	16,090

Notes:
1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest 5.
2. Please note that the figures for 2003–04 refer only to the main payment run i.e. they do not include the late payment run figures. We estimate that there are approximately 100,000 people in Great Britain paid via late payment runs (0.8 per cent. of all payments). However, since late payment runs are mainly in respect of non-system cases whose claim had not been received by qualifying week, they are heavily skewed towards men aged 60.

Source:
IAD Information Centre, 100 per cent. samples.

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in Stalybridge and Hyde received the winter fuel allowance; and how many receive the pension credit. [177685]

Malcolm Wicks: The number of pensioners in Stalybridge and Hyde who received a winter fuel payment for winter 2003–04 was 15,580. As at 31 May 2004, 4,530 households (5,430 individuals) in Stalybridge and Hyde were in receipt of pension credit.

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest 5.
2. The winter fuel payment figure includes only the main payment run—i.e. it does not include late payment run figures. We estimate that there are approximately 100,000 people in Great Britain paid via late payment runs (0.8 per cent. of all payments). However, since late payment runs are mainly in respect of non-system cases whose claim had not been received by qualifying week, they are heavily skewed towards men aged 60.
3. Individuals in receipt of pension credit include a small number of cases of couples where the partner is under age 60.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

All-postal Ballots

Chris Ruane: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what procedures will be put in place to inform electors who have incorrectly filled in their postal ballot papers of their mistake. [178175]

Mr. Leslie: In the four all-postal pilot regions at the 10 June elections, the European Parliamentary and Local Elections (All-Postal) Pilot Order 2004 provided that where an incomplete declaration of identity was found within a ballot pack before noon on 8 June, the returning officer was required to return it to the elector, along with a letter explaining that a completed declaration was needed in order that the vote could be considered valid. If the elector then completed and returned the declaration before the close of poll, their ballot paper would be put forward to the count.

There was no similar requirement placed upon returning officer by the rules governing postal voting in the non-pilot regions.

Postal ballot papers that were returned spoilt were dealt with at the counting of the votes in the same way as votes cast at a polling station. However, if an elector voting by post reported their ballot paper spoilt before returning it, arrangements were in place both in the pilot and non-pilot regions to allow the issuing of a replacement.

Mr. David Amess: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many people were on the electoral roll in the four regions for which all-postal voting pilots were to be held for elections on 10 June. [178407]

Mr Christopher Leslie: As at December 2003, there were 14,083,004 people on the electoral roll for the four all-postal pilot regions which are the North East, East Midlands, Yorkshire & the Humber and North West.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what estimate his Department has made of the number of people in areas not subject to all-postal voting pilots who registered to vote by post at the elections to be held on 10th June in *(a)* England, *(b)* Wales, *(c)* Scotland, *(d)* Essex and *(e)* Southend West. [178408]

Mr Christopher Leslie: Individual Electoral Registration Officers keep records of the number of postal voters in their registration area. For the elections on 10th June this year, in those regions not holding all-postal pilots, it was possible to apply for a postal vote at any time until Wednesday, 2 June and statistics are therefore still being compiled. I understand that the independent Electoral Commission are to publish details of the number of postal ballot papers issued and various other statistics relating to the European Parliamentary elections later this year. Available statistics show that at the 2001 General Election, 1,758,055 postal votes were issued in the UK in total.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what estimate he has made of extra costs arising from problems with distribution of ballot papers in regions for which all-postal ballots are being held for elections on 10th June. [178403]

Mr. Leslie: Returning officers have the contractual relationship with suppliers of ballot packs. They will be submitting claims for their costs of the all-postal ballots to the Elections Claims Unit in due course. When those claims have been received, it will be possible to make an estimate of any costs falling to Returning Officers arising from any problems with printing and distribution.

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment will be made of the comparative outturn costs of all-postal ballots against *(a)* conventional ballots and *(b)* the prior assessments of all-postal costs; and what arrangements the Department will make to repay to local returning officers any unbudgeted expenditure. [178050]

Mr. Leslie: Returning Officers are required to submit their accounts to the Secretary of State within six months of the announcement of the results of the election. This will enable comparisons to be made with

previous expenditure of elections in those areas and with other similar areas running conventional elections and against predicted costs.

The Electoral Commission will be reporting on the all-postal ballots within three months of the close of poll on 10 June. Their report will also include an assessment of the extent to which postal voting provides opportunities for savings in the costs of administering the election or any increase in such costs.

Unforeseen expenditure reasonably incurred to ensure the effective running of the all-postal ballots will be covered by central Government.

Departmental Surveys

Norman Lamb: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what surveys of public perceptions of his Department and of its areas of responsibility have taken place over the last 12 months; what the *(a)* title and *(b)* nature of these surveys was; what the findings of each survey were; where these findings have been published; what the cost of such surveys was; and if he will make a statement and place copies of the surveys in the Library. [176947]

Mr. Leslie: The National Customer Satisfaction postal survey 2003–04, conducted by Opinion Research Corporation (ORC) International plc, sought customer opinion on the service provided across the Court Service. It covered the civil and family courts, the Crown Court, the offices and courts situated in the Royal Courts of Justice, the Probate Registries, as well as the Tribunals administered by the Court Service. User communities consulted included the public, professionals (the Bar, solicitors etc.) and jurors. The survey contributes to measuring user satisfaction under PSA 4.

When compared with the previous (2001–02) exercise, overall satisfaction of court users showed an increase from 78 to 84 per cent. Jurors continue to be the Court Service's most content group of users, with an 86 per cent. overall satisfaction rate achieved during 2003–04.

The survey, which encompassed more than 300 courts and Tribunals, cost just over £250,000.

Two comprehensive reports—one covering the civil and family courts, the other the remainder of the organisation—were produced by ORC International and have been sent to all senior managers in the Court Service. In line with established practice, the reports will be posted on the Court Service website and can be made available for placing in the Library.

Domestic Violence

Tim Loughton: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what arrangements are available to women who have been the subject of domestic violence and do not wish to have their addresses given on electoral rolls. [178502]

Mr. Leslie: Any elector may opt to have his or her name and address excluded from the edited version of the electoral register that is available for sale commercially. Electoral Registration Officers are required to include in the published full register all persons who they consider are eligible to be registered. Anonymous registration or the use of pseudonyms is not currently permitted, though electors may use alternative names (such as maiden or professional names) for registration purposes, provided they are names by which they are commonly known. The independent Electoral Commission in its May 2003 report 'The electoral registration process' recommended that an anonymous registration a genuine threat to their safety. The Government are currently considering this proposal together with the range of other recommendations made by the Electoral Commission relating to current electoral law and procedure.

Magistrates

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many magistrates are Freemasons in *(a)* England, *(b)* the North West, *(c)* Lancashire and *(d)* each Lancashire district. [177167]

Mr. Leslie: Numbers of magistrates who have declared themselves to be masons are:

	Number
(a) England (including the Duchy of Lancaster)	1,147
(b) the North West	152
(c) Lancashire	55
(d) Each Lancashire district:	
Blackburn, Darwen and RV	6
Fylde Coast	13
Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale	12
Chorley	3
Hyndburn	2
Lancaster	7
Ormskirk	1
Preston	10
South Ribble	1

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

EU Funding (St. Helens)

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much investment has gone into St. Helens from European Structural Funds since 2001. [178111]

Phil Hope: As of 10 June 2004 the amount of European Structural Funds, which has gone into the metropolitan borough of St. Helens since 2001 is tabled as follows. The figures illustrate only projects specifically within the metropolitan borough of St. Helens. In addition to this almost 50 per cent. of the Objective 1 programme delivers Pan-Merseyside projects which metropolitan borough of St. Helens residents/businesses have access to.

European Regional Development Fund

£

	ERDF committed	*ERDF spent*
2001	4,604,711	92,159
2002	3,006,317	2,904,581
2003	3,295,736	3,932,120
2004	1,234,822	475,907
Totals	12,141,586	7,404,767

European Social Fund

£

	ERDF	ESF spent
2001	582,357	2,197,990
2002	4,859,643	3,697,572
2003	1,868,264	2,597,526
2004	469,168	1,082,714
Totals	7,779,432	9,575,802

European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund

£

	EAGGF Committed	EAGGF Spent
2001	0	0
2002	0	0
2003	12,847	0
2004	0	8,622
Totals	12,847	8,622

Allotments

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what encouragement he is giving to local authorities to *(a)* maintain and preserve allotments and *(b)* provide replacement land where land formerly used for allotments has been subject to development. [177616]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has a number of measures to encourage local authorities to maintain and preserve allotments. Firstly, if an allotment authority is of the opinion that there is a demand for allotments in its area, it is required, under section 23 of the Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908, to provide a sufficient number of allotments and to let them to persons residing in its area who want them.

Secondly, our advice to local planning authorities on planning for open space, sport and recreation is contained in Planning Policy Guidance note 17 (PPG 17) and recognises allotments as one of the types of open space that may be of public value. Local planning authorities are required to undertake robust audits of such spaces and to conduct assessments of need for their areas. Where the need for particular types of open spaces such as allotments is established, planning authorities are expected to protect them through adopting and implementing appropriate policies.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 (PPG3) appreciates the value that open spaces such as allotments can add to a community's quality of life, health and contribution to nature conservation. Paragraph 53 states that local planning authorities should have clear policies for the protection and creation of open space, and new housing developments should incorporate sufficient provision where such spaces are not already adequately provided within easy access of the new housing.

PPG3 (Annexe C) also specifically excludes parks, recreation grounds and allotments from the definition of previously developed land—even though these areas may contain certain urban features such as pavilions and other buildings, and protecting them from the priority given to development on brownfield land.

Thirdly, in partnership with the Local Government Association, Greater London Authority, and Shell Better Britain Campaign, we published "growing in the community: a good practice guide for the management of allotments", in June 2001. This guide provides comprehensive advice and good practice for local authorities on all aspects of allotment management.

In terms of providing replacement land, a requirement of section 8 of the Allotments Act 1925 is that if an authority wishes to dispose of statutory allotment land, and existing plotholders would be displaced "adequate provision" must be made for them.

PPG17 also provides advice for the instance where a replacement is needed for a site required for development. It specifies that the replacement land should be at least as accessible to current and potential new users, and at least equivalent in terms of size, usefulness, attractiveness and quality. Where possible the aim should be to realise qualitative improvements.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many allotments existed *(a)* 10 years ago and *(b)* in the last year for which figures are available. [177617]

Keith Hill: The "English Allotments Survey: report of the joint survey of allotments in England", published in 1997 by the former Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, provided estimates of the numbers of allotment plots in England for four specific years—1970, 1977, 1978 and 1996. Therefore data on allotments in 1994 are not held centrally, however in 1996 there were 296,923 plots in England.

In "Living Places: Cleaner, Safer, Greener" the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister sets out plans to update the survey and expand it to include community gardens and city farms. This research has now been commissioned and links to the development of a national database of different types of green spaces. Disposal of statutory allotments are also administered and monitored by the Government offices for the regions.

Building Regulations

Ms Walley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his plans are for including micro-renewables in building regulations; and if he will make a statement. [177711]

Phil Hope: The Building Regulations set functional requirements rather than specifying particular ways of showing compliance. This enables builders to develop their own ways of complying with the requirements, using conventional or new technologies as appropriate. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is reviewing the energy efficiency provisions in line with the commitments made in the Energy White Paper and the prospective higher standards that we aim to bring into effect in 2005 are likely to make new systems like micro-renewables more attractive. I hope to announce consultation on the proposed new requirements in the next few weeks.

Correspondence

Martin Linton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects to reply to the letter of the hon. Member for Battersea to the Minister of State for Housing and Planning on the subject of affordable housing. [178676]

Keith Hill: I replied to my hon. Friend on 11 June.

Departmental Duty Officers

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the role of his office's duty officers is; what criteria are used to decide which incidents the duty officers are notified of by fire services; and what use is made of these notifications. [178591]

Mr. Raynsford: The Duty Officer is responsible for taking official and emergency calls out of hours and taking appropriate action as necessary. This involves either contacting nominated on-call officers from appropriate divisions/sections within the Department for Transport (DfT)/the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), and/or taking prescribed action as issued by divisions/sections.

The criteria used to decide which incidents the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister duty officers are notified of by fire and rescue services are set out in 'Dear Chief Officer Letter 3/2004' from Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Fire Services to all Chief Fire Officers in England and Wales dated 29 March 2004. The following extract from that letter sets out the criteria.

A. A fire involving:

A.1 a fatality (including fire service personnel);

B. A fire or incident which has a significant impact on the general public, including one which:

B.1 attracts significant public or media interest;

B.2 involves major disruption to public transport or utilities;

B.3 involves explosives, or where an explosion causes significant structural damage;

B.4 involves sources of ionising radiation or other substances which pose significant personal hazards;

B.5 causes serious contamination or significant environmental impact, including incidents where mass decontamination procedures are initiated; or

B.6 involves widespread public evacuation (e.g. whole street or area), or large scale evacuation from a venue to which the public resort in large numbers (e.g. a place of sport or entertainment, shopping complex, etc.) or from care premises (e.g. a hospital, nursing home, etc.).

C. A fire in which abnormally fast or extensive spread of flame, smoke or heat was caused or assisted by:

C.1 the structure of the building (including linings, voids, or other constructional features); or

C.2 the systems or plant installed within the building.

D. A fire in any building where the active and/or passive fire safety arrangements (e.g. means of escape, fire suppression or detection, fire resisting construction, etc.) either:

D.1 did not fulfil their designed function, resulting in people having to be rescued; or

D.2 only just fulfilled their designed function, resulting in a significant 'near miss'; or

D.3 fulfilled their designed function with notable success.

E. A fire or incident which presents significant operational difficulties, including those:

E.1 where persons are trapped as a result of building collapse;

E.2 involving the use of 10 or more jets or large quantities of specialised extinguishing media;

E.3 associated with significant civil disturbance and/or attacks on firefighters;

E.4 posing a significantly abnormal risk to fire-fighter safety;

E.5 involving significantly difficult access;

E.6 where a deficiency in water supplies is both serious and unexpected;

E.7 involving serious problems with operational equipment including significant loss of, damage to, or lack of such equipment or resources;

E.8 where locally determined standards of fire cover are not met because of factors such as other operational incidents, adverse weather or difficult road traffic conditions, resulting in a significant effect on the development of the fire.

Any notifications received are forwarded from the ODPM Duty Officer to an on-call Inspector from HM Fire Service Inspectorate (HMFSI). The information supplied will be used by HMFSI to identify and monitor trends and provide advice to fire and rescue services. The information will particularly be used to support community fire safety initiatives and to inform the development of risk assessment. It may also be used to provide briefing for Ministers and senior officials, and in the preparation of reports.

Housing

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what requirement there is upon local authorities to review the state of the housing market in their area. [177283]

Keith Hill: Local authorities are required, under Section 87 Local Government Act 2003 to produce a housing strategy for their area. This needs to be based on a robust analysis of the local housing market(s), in conjunction with neighbouring authorities, where appropriate, housing need in the area and the condition of the stock. New guidance on undertaking analysis of housing markets—the Housing Market Assessment Manual—was issued in February this year.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance the Government office for the south-east has issued to local authorities concerning local housing markets. [177284]

Keith Hill: Government office for the south-east (GOSE) has not issued any specific guidance to Local Authorities concerning assessment of housing markets. The South East England Regional Assembly is currently in the process of commissioning research into identifying the Local Housing Markets of South East England to support the Regional Housing Board in producing future Regional Housing Strategies. GOSE is represented on the steering group for this research, which is expected to report in the late summer.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister also published national guidance on local housing market assessments in February 2004.

GOSE has also partnered the Regional Assembly in producing further guidance on local housing needs assessment and urban potential. This guidance was published by the Assembly in January 2004.

Mr. Hawkins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will alter the guidance given to local authorities about preference for high-density housing in order to allow local authorities to follow their own local plans. [178697]

Keith Hill: No. Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 "Housing" (March 2000) (PPG3) sets out the national policy for promoting well-designed sustainable housing development that makes the best use of land. Local planning authorities are required, in formulating their policies, to have regard to this guidance. In considering planning applications in the interim, before development plans can be reviewed, local planning authorities should have regard to this guidance as a material consideration, which may supersede the policies in their development plan. As with any national policy, if there are local or regional circumstances, which justify a departure from national policy, these departures should be justified through the development plan process.

Local Government Finance

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimates he has made of the revenue each eligible local authority will receive as a result of the changes to second home discount for council tax. [177964]

Mr. Raynsford: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to the hon. Member for Cotswold (Mr. Clifton-Brown) on 28 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1134W.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Brady: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 2 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 821W, (1) on the Green Belt, when he will write to the hon. Member for Altrincham and Sale West with the information; [174946]

(2) on greenbelt, when he will write to the hon. Member for Altrincham and Sale West giving figures for the reduction of greenbelt area in metropolitan areas. [177596]

Keith Hill: I will write to the hon. Member as soon as possible.

Planning Advice

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much money his Department has allocated in this financial year to provide advice to local communities on planning matters; to which organisations such money has been paid; and how much has been paid to each. [178231]

Keith Hill: The Government are providing £3.8 million for Planning Aid in England over a three year period up to 2005–06. The funding will allow Planning Aid to enhance its service, become more proactive and develop a greater role in targeting communities which traditionally do not get involved in the planning system. The funding allocation in this financial year is expected to be £1.454 million.

Through the Special Grants Programme (SPG) in 2004–05, £40,050 is being provided to the Royal Town Planning Institute to aid the development of mainstream practice in which planners will work with communities to deliver sustainable communities. £58,000 is being provided to the Town and Country Planning Association to improve the science and art of town and country planning—one of the aims of the project is power for people to influence decisions that affect them. £31,550 is being provided to Panning Aid for London, to establish greater cohesion between different racial groups in the community and increase the ability of disempowered groups to encourage successful housing schemes. To date on these three projects, £7,894 has been paid to Planning Aid for London.

Population Movements

Christine Russell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many people moved to the North West from within the UK in *(a)* June 2003, *(b)* March 2003, *(c)* December 2002 and *(d)* June 2002. [176481]

Keith Hill: Information is not available for the particular months requested. It is estimated that during the year to June 2003, 109,500 people moved to the North West from elsewhere in the UK. The corresponding figure for the year to June 2002 was 107,600. These Office for National Statistics estimates are based on information from registrations with doctors.

Ms Christine Russell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many people living in the North West in *(a)* June 2003, *(b)* March 2003, *(c)* December 2002 and *(d)* June 2002 originated from different areas of the UK. [176482]

Keith Hill: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Public Funding (Crosby)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much public funding has been spent in Crosby from the Capital Investment in Housing Fund. [177853]

Keith Hill: Funding to local authorities for housing purposes have risen consistently by about 15 per cent. per annum on average. This includes the Major Repairs Allowance we introduced in 2001–2 specifically for the improvement of local authority stock alongside the Decent Homes standard which sets out minimum standards to be met by 2010. Sefton's allocation for 2003–04 was £14.249 million and has been supplemented by the announcement of £86 million to be made available to the Merseyside Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder, NewHeartlands, between 2003–04 and 2005–06.

Public Houses

Donald Anderson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on his Department's policy towards upward-only rent reviews in contracts between tenants and pub companies. [178303]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Welsh Assembly Government have issued a consultation paper entitled: "Commercial property leases: options for deterring or outlawing the use of upward only rent review clauses". A copy has been made available in the Library of the House. The paper acknowledges that upward only rent reviews (UORRs) are a source of grievance to many in the business community. It explores whether any action is necessary,

and considers a number of options for legislating against UORRs. The paper invites comments on the merits of each option—by 30 September 2004.

Public Toilets

Dr. Cable: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what steps he takes to monitor the *(a)* availability and *(b)* standards of public toilet provision by local authorities for (i) disabled people and (ii) the general population; [178121]

(2) what guidance is given to local authorities on minimum standards of provision of public toilets for *(a)* disabled people and *(b)* the general population. [178122]

Phil Hope: The Office of Deputy Prime Minister does not monitor, or provide guidance to, local authorities specifically on the provision, availability or standard of public toilets. Local authorities operate under Best Value duties in respect of all of their functions and must comply with the relevant requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Social Housing

Harry Cohen: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what provisions are being made to increase the amount of affordable and quality housing in *(a)* Leyton and Wanstead, *(b)* the London borough of Redbridge and *(c)* the London borough of Waltham Forest. [178194]

Keith Hill: The housing capital allocations to social and key worker schemes in the Housing Corporation's Approved Development Programme for support to new supply and regeneration schemes in 2004–05 and 2005–06 for the London borough of Redbridge and the London borough of Waltham Forest are as follows:

	Social housing grant (£ million)	*Homes*
LB Redbridge	14.017	337
LB Waltham Forest	14.996	273

Information at constituency level is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what weighting he expects *(a)* a planning authority and *(b)* a planning inspector to give to (i) environmental protection of land where this is supported by the local community and (ii) the designated use in an agreed statutory district plan of a piece of land where such use is contrary to an application for speculative housing development; and if he will make a statement. [178195]

Keith Hill: Each application is determined with reference to the local authority's development plan for the area and, where appropriate, to any other material considerations, including guidance such as our Planning Policy Guidance Notes, when assessing the impacts and land-use merits of each proposal.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent discussions he has had with Elevate, the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder, concerning its proposals; and if he will make a statement. [178257]

Keith Hill: Officials of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister have regular discussions with Elevate on its progress in implementing its market renewal scheme, grant towards which was announced in my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister's statement of 26 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 69WS.

Ms Buck: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he is taking to encourage progress in delivery of social housing on sites where planning permission has been granted but where building has not yet started. [178357]

Keith Hill: There are various incentives in the planning system to bring about the provision of social housing once consent has been granted. First, consents are time limited. Secondly, the local planning authority may ask the developer to execute planning obligations, or it may impose conditions which provide that a specified proportion of the general market housing on the site cannot be occupied until the social housing element has been built and transferred to a registered social landlord (RSL). Finally, the Housing Corporation seeks to engage with RSLs at an early stage in the planning process, so that funding through its Approved Development Programme can be made available, where appropriate.

Staffa Industrial Estate Fire

Harry Cohen: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the causes of the recent major fire on the Staffa Industrial Estate in East London; and if he will make a statement. [178180]

Mr. Raynsford: The Metropolitan Police and London Fire Brigade are treating the incident as arson. Investigations are continuing.

Stair Lifts

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent Advisory Note he has sent to *(a)* the Secretary of State for Health and *(b)* health authorities on the purchase of stair lifts. [178230]

Yvette Cooper: Stairlifts in existing dwellings would normally be provided by the local housing authority through a disabled facilities grant. My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister has not issued any recent advice on the purchase of Stairlifts.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Probation Service

6. **Joyce Quin:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received about the establishment of the national offender management service. [178155]

Mr. Blunkett: We have received over 600 representations on the establishment of the national offender management service. We have received 42 specifically in relation to the structure. My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, my officials and myself have met a wide range of groups involving Martin Narey seeing over 3,000 members of staff with 18 road shows across the country. I myself have met the TUC, the Prison Officers Association and

the representatives of the Probation Union. We believe that with the extension on the consultation not simply to the end of this month, but over the next year as we develop the new structures, we will be able to ensure that there is a consensus of getting this right.

Anti-social Behaviour

15. **Claire Ward:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what further measures he proposes to reduce the incidence of antisocial behaviour. [178167]

Ms Blears: We are committed to tackling antisocial behaviour. In 1998 we introduced antisocial behaviour orders through the Crime and Disorder Act. Further to this the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 provides a further wide range of tools to tackle antisocial behaviour. The Act clarifies, streamlines and reinforces the powers available to practitioners and builds on the measures we have already introduced. It offers the single biggest package of measures to tackle antisocial behaviour.

Further powers to tackle antisocial behaviour in the private rented sector, such as licensing of private sector landlords in areas where there is significant and persistent antisocial behaviour, are being proposed in part 3 of the Housing Bill, currently before Parliament.

We are determined to remove all barriers to local agencies taking action to tackle antisocial behaviour. We will continue to listen to feedback about the powers available and look to legislate where necessary.

19. **Lawrie Quinn:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans his Department has to support the gating of alleys to tackle anti-social behaviour. [178171]

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans his Department has to support the gating of alleys to tackle anti-social behaviour. [178170]

Ms Blears: I will, with permission, Mr. Speaker, group this Question and question 19 together.

On 5 March 2004 the Home Office launched Operation Gate it—a new fund of £2.3 million to tackle anti-social behaviour in alleyways. Successful schemes for this year have now been identified and will be announced shortly.

Gating is just one of many solutions to these problems, however, and will not always be appropriate. So, through Gate It, local communities will be able to bid for lighting/landscaping/CCTV funding—as well as gates.

Immigration Service (East Anglia)

16. **Mr. Bellingham:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he next expects to meet representatives of the immigration service in East Anglia to discuss initiatives to control illegal immigration. [178168]

Mr. Browne: This morning I have met with the Assistant Director of the Immigration Services Eastern Region. I have read the hon. Gentleman's thoughtful contribution to the Second Reading debate on the Gangmasters Bill, in which he correctly identified the issues of concern to the Immigration Service. He is aware that the Immigration Service carried out a series of successful operations in the Kings Lynn area last year and that with the opening of a local office at Swaffham there is now an enhanced enforcement capability in East Anglia.

I hold regular meetings with the Senior Director of Immigration Service Operations who keeps me informed of initiatives to control illegal immigration into the United Kingdom. I also receive regular reports about a wide range of Immigration Service operations.

Restorative Justice

17. **Mr. Barnes:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to increase the use of restorative justice. [178169]

Paul Goggins: The Government are committed to increasing the use of restorative justice.

Restorative justice is already widely available within the Youth Justice System and we intend to extend its use as part of the new conditional caution and in community sentences more generally.

Later in the year we will publish guidance for Local Criminal Justice Boards who want to develop their use of restorative approaches.

Firearms

21. **Peter Bradley:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on his plans to review firearms legislation. [178173]

Caroline Flint: Our consultation paper on firearms controls was published on 12 May. This is the first step in a comprehensive review of current legislation. Consultees have until the end of August to respond and we will consider all responses carefully before deciding what further action may be needed.

Domestic Violence

22. **Julie Morgan:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures he is taking to support victims of domestic violence and bring more perpetrators to justice. [178174]

Paul Goggins: Domestic violence is a horrific crime, which affects one in four women and causes the death of two women each week.

The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Bill, currently before Parliament, is the biggest overhaul of domestic violence legislation for 30 years. It includes a range of measures that will provide additional protection and support for victims and help to bring more perpetrators to justice.

Advisers (Conflicts of Interest)

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he takes to avoid conflicts of interest when advisers from outside the Civil Service are seconded to the Home Office to work on projects; and what restrictions are placed on the abilities of such advisers to participate in the bidding process for contracts arising from that advice. [175105]

Fiona Mactaggart: Secondments are part of the Interchange initiative, which promotes the exchange of people and good practice between the Civil Service and other organisations—public, private and voluntary. Interchange provides opportunities for civil servants to learn new skills, widen their experience and develop ideas. It also brings in skills and experience from other sectors.

When advisers from outside the Civil Service are seconded into the Home Office to work on projects, they are informed in the secondment contract that they will be subject to the Official Secrets Act and will be expected to abide by the conditions and rules governing the conduct of civil servants. In particular, they are informed that they will need to avoid situations that may lead to conflicts of interest. The secondment contract, which is drawn up between the secondee, the seconding organisation and the Home Office, also states that the secondee shall keep all commercially confidential information secure and shall not release any commercially confidential information to parties outside the Home Office—including the seconding organisation—without its written approval, instruction or request.

The Home Office recognises that ethical behaviour in tendering for contracts is of the utmost importance, because the activities may involve the spending of public funds and are subject to close scrutiny. It is imperative that the integrity of the department as a whole should be maintained. Accordingly, the Home Office does not allow secondees to take part in any bidding processes that involve the organisation from which they are seconded.

Amsterdam Treaty Protocols

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on which occasions the United Kingdom has used the protocols attached to the Amsterdam Treaty not to participate in a proposal from the European Commission or a member state concerning asylum, immigration or border controls. [174716]

Mr. Browne: Under the Protocol on the position of the United Kingdom and Ireland, agreed at the Amsterdam Inter-Governmental Conference and annexed to the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community, the UK does not take part in any measure under Title IV of the treaty establishing the European Community (visa, asylum, immigration) unless it notifies the Council, in writing, of its intention to participate (opt-in).

The policy of the United Kingdom towards participating in measures under Title is to review each proposed measure individually and to opt in when it is in the interests of the UK to do so. In a reply to a written question from the right hon. gentleman, the Member for Penrith and the Borders (David Maclean) on 12 March 1999, my right hon. friend the Home Secretary confirmed his statement that day at the Justice and Home Affairs Council that, while we would maintain our frontier controls in line with the Amsterdam Treaty Protocol, we wished to co-operate in all other Justice and Home Affairs areas which did not conflict with this objective. In relation to Title IV, my right hon. friend the Home Secretary highlighted areas in which the UK would look to participate as asylum and civil judicial co-operation measures and measures to control illegal immigration where these did not conflict with maintenance of national immigration controls. In accordance with these stated principles, the UK has not, to date, notified its intention to participate in a number of EU proposals, a list of which will be placed in the Library.

Asylum Seekers

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many refugees have been granted asylum in the UK *(a)* including dependants and *(b)* excluding dependants in each year since 1979. [177105]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 8 June 2004]:* The tables show the total number of asylum seekers, including and excluding dependants, granted asylum in the United Kingdom, 1979–2003. Information on initial decision outcomes, broken down by nationality, is published in the quarterly web pages and in the Home Office annual statistical bulletin "Asylum Statistics United Kingdom". Copies of these publications are available from the Library of the House and from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Applications[1] received for asylum in the United Kingdom, and initial decisions, including dependants[2] 1979 to 2003

	Total initial decisions	Recognised as a refugee and granted asylum[3]	Not recognised as a refugee but granted exceptional leave	Not recognised as a refugee but granted discretionary leave[4]
1979	949	525	215	..
1980	1,797	1,147	238	..
1981	2,358	1,473	278	..
1982	2,942	1,727	311	..
1983	2,950	1,185	939	..
1984	2,011	689	802	..
1985	3,802	915	2,156	..
1986	4,045	543	2,815	..
1987	3,479	464	2,229	..
1988	3,888	975	2,289	..
1989	10,270	3,335	5,840	..
1990	6,055	1,590	3,610	..
1991	9,140	800	2,950	..
1992	59,050	1,900	21,680	..
1993	36,890	2,860	15,480	..
1994	27,755	1,395	5,445	..
1995	35,195	2,200	6,780	..
1996	49,350	3,660	7,510	..
1997	48,530	6,210	4,740	..
1998	42,905	8,245	6,455	..
1999	45,850	10,405	4,640	..
2000	132,925	12,135	12,645	..
2001[9]	155,900	14,755	26,025	..
2002[10]	103,450	10,990	22,470	..
2003[10]	80,960	5,225	5,120	3,275

	Not recognised as a refugee but granted humanitarian protection[4]	Refused asylum and exceptional leave	Granted exceptional leave under backlog criteria[5,6]	Refused on non-compliance grounds under backlog criteria[5,7]
1979	[8]	209	[8]	[8]
1980	[8]	412	[8]	[8]
1981	[8]	607	[8]	[8]
1982	[8]	904	[8]	[8]
1983	[8]	826	[8]	[8]
1984	[8]	520	[8]	[8]
1985	[8]	731	[8]	[8]
1986	[8]	687	[8]	[8]
1987	[8]	786	[8]	[8]
1988	[8]	624	[8]	[8]
1989	[8]	1,095	[8]	[8]
1990	[8]	855	[8]	[8]
1991	[8]	5,390	[8]	[8]
1992	[8]	35,480	[8]	[8]
1993	[8]	18,550	[8]	[8]
1994	[8]	20,915	[8]	[8]
1995	[8]	26,220	[8]	[8]
1996	[8]	38,180	[8]	[8]
1997	[8]	37,585	[8]	[8]
1998	[8]	28,205	[8]	[8]
1999	[8]	13,915	15,195	1,690
2000	[8]	92,330	14,045	1,775
2001[9]	[8]	115,120	[8]	[8]
2002[10]	[8]	69,990	[8]	[8]
2003[10]	175	67,165	[8]	[8]

[1] Figures from 1989 onwards are rounded to the nearest five.
[2] From 1992 to 2001 figures are estimated. Including dependants who applied with the principal applicant and those who arrived subsequently but before the principal application was decided. Figures for 2002 are based on actual data and therefore rounded to the nearest five. Previous dependants applications figures rounded
nearest 100 due to being an estimation.
[3] Excluding South East Asian refugees (pre 1996 only).
[4] Discretionary Leave and Humanitarian Protection replaced Exceptional Leave to Remain from 1 April 2003.
[5] Cases decided under measures aimed at reducing the pre 1996 asylum application backlog.
[6] Includes cases where asylum or exceptional leave has been granted under the backlog criteria.
[7] Includes some cases where the application has been refused on substantive grounds.
[8] Not applicable
[9] Revised figures.
[10] Provisional figures.

Applications[1] received for asylum in the United Kingdom, and initial decisions, excluding dependants 1979 to 2003

	Total initial decisions	Recognised as a refugee and granted asylum[2]	Not recognised as a refugee but granted exceptional leave	Not recognised as a refugee but granted discretionary leave[3]
1979	[7]	[7]	[7]	[8]
1980	[7]	[7]	[7]	[8]
1981	[7]	[7]	[7]	[8]
1982	[7]	[7]	[7]	[8]
1983	[7]	[7]	[7]	[8]
1984	1,431	453	631	[8]
1985	2,635	574	1,559	[8]
1986	2,983	348	2,102	[8]
1987	2,432	266	1,531	[8]
1988	2,702	628	1,578	[8]
1989	6,955	2,210	3,860	[8]
1990	4,025	920	2,400	[8]
1991	6,075	505	2,190	[8]
1992	34,900	1,115	15,325	[8]
1993	23,405	1,590	11,125	[8]

Applications[1] received for asylum in the United Kingdom, and initial decisions, excluding dependants 1979 to 2003

	Total initial decisions	Recognised as a refugee and granted asylum[2]	Not recognised as a refugee but granted exceptional leave	Not recognised as a refugee but granted discretionary leave[3]
1994	20,990	825	3,660	[8]
1995	27,005	1,295	4,410	[8]
1996	38,960	2,240	5,055	[8]
1997	36,045	3,985	3,115	[8]
1998	31,570	5,345	3,910	[8]
1999	33,720	7,815	2,465	[8]
2000	109,205	10,375	11,495	[8]
2001[9]	120,950	11,450	20,190	[8]
2002[10]	83,540	8,270	20,135	[8]
2003[10]	64,605	3,880	3,970	3,105

	Not recognised as a refugee but granted humanitarian protection[3]	Refused asylum and exceptional leave	Granted exceptional leave under backlog criteria[4,5]	Refused on non-compliance grounds under backlog criteria[4,6]
1979	[8]	[7]	[8]	[8]
1980	[8]	[7]	[8]	[8]
1981	[8]	[7]	[8]	[8]
1982	[8]	[7]	[8]	[8]
1983	[8]	[7]	[8]	[8]
1984	[8]	347	[8]	[8]
1985	[8]	502	[8]	[8]
1986	[8]	533	[8]	[8]
1987	[8]	635	[8]	[8]
1988	[8]	496	[8]	[8]
1989	[8]	890	[8]	[8]
1990	[8]	705	[8]	[8]
1991	[8]	3,380	[8]	[8]
1992	[8]	18,465	[8]	[8]
1993	[8]	10,690	[8]	[8]
1994	[8]	16,500	[8]	[8]
1995	[8]	21,300	[8]	[8]
1996	[8]	31,670	[8]	[8]
1997	[8]	28,945	[8]	[8]
1998	[8]	22,315	[8]	[8]
1999	[8]	11,025	11,140	1,275
2000	[8]	75,680	10,325	1,335
2001[9]	[8]	89,310	[8]	[8]
2002[10]	[8]	55,130	[8]	[8]
2003[10]	135	53,510	[8]	[8]

[1] Figures from 1989 onwards are rounded to the nearest five.
[2] Excluding South East Asian refugees (pre 1996 only).
[3] Discretionary Leave and Humanitarian Protection replaced Exceptional Leave to Remain from 1 April 2003.
[4] Cases decided under measures aimed at reducing the pre 1996 asylum application backlog.
[5] Includes cases where asylum or exceptional leave has been granted under the backlog criteria.
[6] Includes some cases where the application has been refused on substantive grounds.
[7] Not available.
[8] Not applicable.
[9] Revised figures.
[10] Provisional figures.

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department by what criteria he judges a country to be unsafe to return failed asylum seekers to. [176276]

Mr. Browne: All asylum claims are considered on their individual merits in accordance with the United Kingdom's obligations under the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. Those asylum seekers who establish that their claim meets the criteria of the 1951 Convention are granted

asylum. If asylum is refused, we will go on to consider whether humanitarian protection or discretionary leave should be granted in accordance with our obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights.

In considering claims the Home Office takes full account of up to date information from a wide range of sources about the situation in the country of origin. These sources include intergovernmental organisations (such as the UN), governmental sources (including the Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and human rights organisations (for example Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch).

If an individual is unsuccessful in his application and in any appeal they make to the independent Immigration Appellate Authority we consider that it is safe for that individual to be removed.

The only country to which, as a matter of policy, we do not at present generally enforce the return of failed asylum seekers is Zimbabwe. This policy is not based on asylum or human rights reasons but on our view that in the wider context of the Government's position on Zimbabwe, it would be inappropriate to return forcibly failed asylum seekers at this time.

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of asylum applicants claimed asylum in the UK *(a)* at Dover, *(b)* at other UK seaports, *(c)* at Heathrow Airport, *(d)* at Gatwick Airport, *(e)* at other UK airports, *(f)* in-country within 14 days of arrival and *(g)* in-country over 14 days of arrival in (i) 2002 and (ii) 2003. [176291]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* The requested information is unavailable and could be produced only at disproportionate cost. Data on asylum applications is collated on when the application is made, and not on when applicants arrive in the UK. For applicants entering clandestinely or through legitimate legal entry routes and applying in country, their date of arrival is not necessarily recorded on entry and they are not at that point identifiable as a future asylum seeker. The table shows asylum applications to the United Kingdom by port and in country.

Applications[1] received for asylum in the United Kingdom, excluding dependants, 2002–03

	2002[2]			2003[2]	
Total applications	Applied at port	Applied in country	Total applications	Applied at port	Applied in country
84,130	26,560	57,570	49,370	13,810	35,560

[1] Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5.
[2] Provisional figures.

Information on asylum applications is published in quarterly web pages and in the annual statistical bulletin 'Asylum Statistics United Kingdom'. Copies of these publications and others relating to general immigration to the UK are available from the Library and from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will estimate how many asylum seekers who have been refused leave to remain and exhausted all appeal rights have not departed from the UK. [177124]

Mr. Browne: Information on the number of asylum seekers who have exhausted their rights of appeal is not readily available and could be obtained only by examination of individual case files to obtain information on the final outcomes from each tier of the appeal process. This would incur disproportionate cost. No information on the number of unsuccessful asylum seekers awaiting removal is available, partly because some applicants may leave the United Kingdom without informing the Immigration Service.

The Government have commissioned research into the methods used in other countries to estimate the overall size of the illegal population including failed asylum seekers, in order to define methods appropriate for the UK.

Asylum Support

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been in receipt of National Asylum Support Service support in each year since its inception. [177090]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 8 June 2004]:* The National Asylum Support Service (NASS) assumed responsibility for the support of asylum seekers on 3 April 2000. The following table shows the number of asylum seekers (including dependants) that have been in receipt of National Asylum Support Service support as at the end of each year since its inception. Information in respect of the number of persons supported by NASS during a given year is not available.

Information on the number of asylum seekers supported by NASS is published in the quarterly web pages and in the annual statistical bulletin Asylum Statistics United Kingdom, available from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate web site at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Asylum seekers supported by NASS[1,2] by type of support

As at the end	In receipt of subsistence only support	Supported in NASS accommodation
December 2000	8,870	13,530
December 2001	25,310	40,325
December 2002	37,815	54,045
December 2003	30,360	49,760
March 2004 (Quarter 1, 2004)	27,635	48,610

[1] Including dependants.
[2] All figures are rounded to the nearest 5.

Becket House Reporting Centre, Bermondsey

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what compensation for costs of travel will be available to reportees living in Thurrock consequent on the decision to require them to report at Beckett House, Bermondsey; and if he will make a statement. [177748]

Mr. Browne: In my answer to the Member for Thurrock's separate but related question (177749), I have clarified that the requirement on people living in Thurrock to report to Becket House was an

administrative error, which has now been rectified. In view of this, the issue of compensating them for costs of travel to Becket House does not arise.

Commission for Racial Equality

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will make a decision on the grant aid to be given to the Commission for Racial Equality. [174827]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office formally delegated the Commission for Racial Equality's budget for 2004–05 on 28 April 2004.

Computer File Formats

Mr. Allan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his Department's policy is in respect of the computer file formats used for the *(a)* distribution and *(b)* archiving of publicly available documents. [173358]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office is keen to ensure that published documents are fully accessible to all members of the public who wish to use them. We make use of standard electronic formats that should meet the requirements of most document users.

(a) Distribution

The computer files and formats used for the distribution of Home Office material are Word/ Excel based documents, which are standard and widely compatible both internally and with external suppliers.

(b) Archiving

Material placed on the web site for access by the public is at present stored in mixture of Portable Document Format (PDF) and Hypertext Mark Up Language (HTML). The Home Office Communication Directorate is actively considering the benefits of storage of future material in Extensible Mark-Up Language (XML).

CPS

Mr. Grieve: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the extent of his responsibility for the Crown Prosecution Service. [159300]

The Solicitor-General: I have been asked to reply.

The Director of Public Prosecutions is the head of the Crown Prosecution Service and he discharges his functions under the superintendence of the Attorney-General.

Credit Card Purchases

Judy Mallaber: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of individuals who have had their credit card facilities withdrawn by the issuing bank after court convictions for using the card to purchase child pornography images. [173056]

Paul Goggins: A consideration as to whether an individual has their credit card facilities withdrawn by an issuing bank or other card supplier following a conviction for an offence relating to the purchase of child abuse images is a matter for each individual card issuer to decide, dependent upon the terms and conditions associated with the card. There is no centrally held record of the number of instances of such an action taking place.

Government, the credit card industry, and law enforcement are actively considering what action can be taken in respect of individuals convicted of an offence which has involved the purchase of child abuse images using any payment mechanisms. More widely work remains ongoing to proactively identifying sites selling child abuse images, seeking the removal of payment facilities from these sites and appropriate action taken by law enforcement.

Judy Mallaber: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with the credit card industry about action to prevent the use of credit card facilities to fund the purchase of *(a)* child pornography images and *(b)* illegal websites. [173057]

Paul Goggins: Extensive work has been undertaken on the issue of preventing credit cards and other payment mechanisms from being used to purchase child abuse images online. The Association of Payment Clearing Services (APACS), the UK Trade Association for Payments, the Internet Watch Foundation, and the Children's Charities' Coalition for Internet Safety, have all worked actively to prevent such activity and have developed close working relationships over the last few years. This resulted in a joint announcement by them in March 2003.

The arrangements now in place have made it possible for law enforcement agencies to become more effective in investigating detecting and taking action against those sites that use specific payment services to sell child abuse images. The relevant card companies will also seek to trace the banks and the billing companies involved in processing payments and to cease the use of their cards for such activity. Units such as the National Hi Tech Crime Unit through their industry outreach programme, have been particularly successful in working closely with industry on intelligence and target hardening to design out hi-tech crime.

It is clear that co-ordinated action by the major credit card schemes in conjunction with other relevant organisations can have a major impact on the commercial trade in child abuse images. We welcome the efforts that have been made so far and will continue to work with them to make this as effective as possible, involving as many different payment mechanisms as is possible.

While much of the focus of preventing the use of credit cards to facilitate illegal activities has to date focused on their association with child abuse images, work has also been undertaken to prevent credit cards and other payment mechanisms from being used to prevent a wider range of illegal activities on line.

Gender Pay Gap

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the

pay gap between men and women employed by his Department and its agencies in *(a)* Southampton, *(b)* Eastleigh, *(c)* Winchester and *(d)* Romsey. [171632]

Fiona Mactaggart: None. The Department has undertaken a number of equal pay reviews, but data have not been analysed by individual locations.

Immigration and Nationality Directorate

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects the Immigration and Nationality Directorate to return the passports belonging to Mrs. Maliheh Sadeghi Boroujerdi and Mr. Mohsen Dastmaldi, which were sent to the Directorate on 4 July 2003. [178080]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 10 June 2004]:* The passports of Mrs. Maliheh Sadeghi Boroujerdi and Mr. Mohsen Dastmaldi were returned to their legal representatives, Halliday Reeves Solicitors, on 8 June.

Iraq Refugees

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals from Iraq have been refused refugee status and other forms of protection in each month this year; and what their current status is. [173217]

Mr. Browne: Information of numbers of initial decisions and refusals of Iraqi principal applicants, and on numbers of appeals determined at the IAA and dismissed, for each month of 2003, are given in the tables. Appeals figures do not necessarily relate to initial decisions made in the same period.

Initial decisions on asylum applications[1,2] received in the United Kingdom, excluding dependants, 2003 by month, nationals of Iraq

Principal applicants

	Total decisions	*Grants of asylum*	*Grants of ELR*	*Grants of HP*	*Grants of DL*	*Total refusals[3]*
January	1,370	30	1,030	n/a	n/a	305
February	990	30	685	n/a	n/a	280
March	585	5	390	n/a	n/a	185
April	30	*	n/a	—	—	30
May	55	*	n/a	*	—	50
June	250	—	n/a	—	*	250
July	650	—	n/a	—	*	650
August	515	*	n/a	—	10	505
September	625	—	n/a	—	5	620
October	675	—	n/a	—	10	670
November	530	—	n/a	—	10	520
December	475	*	n/a	*	10	465
Total	6,755	75	2,105	*	45	4,530

[1] Provisional figures rounded to nearest 5, with * = 1 or 2.
[2] Information is of initial determination decisions, excluding the outcome of appeals or other subsequent decisions.
[3] May include some refusals under non compliance grounds.
Note:
N/a = not applicable.

Outcome of appeals[1,2] determined by adjudicators of the Immigration Appellate Authority, excluding dependants, nationals of Iraq, 2003, by month

Number of principal appellants

	Appeals determined by adjudicators[2]						
		Allowed		*Dismissed*		*Withdrawn*	
	Total	*Total*	*As % of determined*	*Total*	*As % of determined*	*Total*	*As % of determined*
January	445	110	25%	295	66%	40	9%
February	440	90	20%	300	68%	50	12%
March	465	85	18%	315	67%	70	15%
April	150	30	21%	110	72%	10	7%
May	40	10	21%	25	67%	5	13%
June	15	*	17%	5	42%	5	42%
July	220	10	3%	165	75%	50	22%
August	485	20	4%	415	86%	45	9%
September	515	25	5%	460	89%	35	7%
October	810	35	5%	705	87%	65	8%
November	1,000	55	5%	900	90%	45	4%
December	810	25	3%	760	94%	25	3%
Total	5,400	495	9%	4,465	83%	445	8%

[1] Provisional figures rounded to nearest 5 (except percentages), with * = 1 or 2. Figures may not add up due to independent rounding. Data on appeal outcomes by nationality in this table are derived from Immigration and Nationality Directorate electronic sources.
[2] igures include cases withdrawn by the Home Office, as well as the appellant.

The current status of Iraqi asylum seekers, who were refused refugee status and other forms of protection in the UK in 2003, will depend on whether they have appealed against this decision, and if so what the outcome of the appeal was. If all appeal rights have been exhausted and no leave of any kind has been granted,

these individuals will have no basis on which to remain in the United Kingdom and will be expected to return to Iraq.

Information on asylum applications, initial decisions and appeals, by nationality, is published in quarterly web pages and in the annual statistical bulletin Asylum Statistics United Kingdom. The next quarter will be published at the end of August 2004. Copies of these publications and others relating to general immigration to the UK are available from the Library of the House and from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Ministerial Visits

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many journeys were made by helicopter by each Minister in his Department in each of the last 10 years; and what the journey length was in each case. [175741]

Mr. Blunkett: In respect of overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The Government have also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Libraries of the House. These reports contain information reaching back to 1995–96. Information for earlier years could be obtained only at disproportionate cost and in some cases will no longer be held. Information for 2003–04 will be published in due course.

Detailed information for all Ministers in respect of UK travel is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

National Neighbourhood Watch Association

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what future funding he plans to provide to the National Neighbourhood Watch Association; and if he will make a statement. [178172]

Fiona Mactaggart: The National Neighbourhood Watch Association is an independent organisation funded by commercial sponsorship since its inception.

Nevertheless, in 2002–03 the Government gave a total of £350,000 to support it through financial difficulties. Following a recent audit my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary decided that no further public funding should be provided.

The Government will continue to support local Neighbourhood Watch. This support includes free publications and training materials, and staff time.

National Asylum Support Service

Ann McKechin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement regarding the operation of the National Asylum Support Service scheme in Scotland. [178164]

Mr. Browne: The National Asylum Support Service (NASS) scheme works very well in Scotland. As at the end of March 2004 there were over 5,000 asylum seekers and dependants in NASS dispersal accommodation in Glasgow. The NASS regional office in Glasgow has 35 staff performing outreach, investigations and housing management functions, and playing a key role in working with Scottish stakeholders.

National Identity Register

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what data sharing arrangements there will be between the proposed National Identity Register and the UK Population Register. [170335]

Mr. Browne: "Legislation on Identity Cards—A Consultation" (Cm 6178), makes clear that there will be no general power to share data held on the National Identity Register. Applications for one of the family of identity cards will require checks to be made against other databases only to establish that an application for a card, or related purpose such as reissue, is genuine. Such checks might include a Population Register developed under the Citizen's Information Project, were that to go ahead and subject to enabling legislation. We will also consider whether any changes to an individual's name and address details within the National Identity Register might be supplied through the Population Register.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many consultants have been seconded to his Department to work on identity cards; and at what expense. [176239]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* During 2003–04 two consultants were seconded to the Identity Cards Programme for part of the year. Total spending on seconded consultants that year was £75,569.

New Hall Prison

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many suicides there were in New Hall women's prison in each of the past three years; [172655]

(2) how many incidents of self harm occurred in New Hall women's prison in each of the last three months. [172656]

Paul Goggins: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply given on 8 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 327W.

Official Vehicles

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of official vehicles used by his Department are run on *(a)* petrol, *(b)* diesel, *(c)* liquid petroleum gas and *(d)* compressed natural gas. [172765]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Government as a whole have signed up to various targets for improving the performance of their own vehicle fleets, details of which are available at: www.sustainable-development.gov.uk

The following table provides a breakdown of the cars currently in the directly managed Home Office fleet by vehicle category, fuel type and emission performance. This does not include information for vehicles provided for use by Ministers and senior officials by the Government Car Service (GCS). Detailed information

on the breakdown of the GCS fleet is being provided by its Chief Executive, Mr. Nick Matheson. Copies of his letter will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Cars	*Number*	*Percentage*
Petrol	101	7
Diesel	1,260	92
Liquid Petroleum Gas	8	1
Total	1,369	100

Older People

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what *(a)* initiatives, *(b)* campaigns and *(c)* advisory bodies relating to older people his Department (i) is responsible and (ii) has provided funding since 2001; and what the cost in each year was for each one. [166240]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office is involved in a number of campaigns and initiatives relating to older people.

Older people are the most likely targets of 'distraction burglary' i.e. burglary committed by bogus callers. In October 2001, the "Good Practice Guide on Tackling Distraction Burglary" was published alongside two videos and supporting literature, which continue to be used today. The cost of this was in the region of £127,000. To support this:

practitioner seminars have been run across the regions and a newsletter providing updates and advice is circulated at a cost of £5,000 per year;

a new mini website dedicated to distraction burglary has been developed to sit within the Department's crime reduction website; and

this comes at the same time as a new media campaign to raise awareness of distraction burglary at a cost of £77,000.

The Department supports the charity Help the Aged:

it has contributed over £60,000 to Help the Aged for Rural Development since 2001;

departmental representatives have attended, spoken at and hosted seminars in the Help the Aged Senior Safety conference programme since 2002 (travel and subsistence costs only); and

the Department is about to launch, through Help the Aged, a three-month pilot of 'reassurance cards' to advise older people about home security at a cost of £2,000.

It was recently announced that World War II veterans and civilians over the age of 75 would be eligible for a free 10-year passport. By 19 May, almost 500 free passports had been issued, the majority to veterans of the Normandy landings. The standard passport currently costs £42.

Over this period, the Active Community Unit has strategically funded three organisations specifically to involve older people in volunteering:

The Experience Corps was established in 2001 and received £5.5 million, £7 million, and £7 million over the three years of the initiative, this funding ended March 2004;

(RSVP, retired and senior volunteer programme), received £130,000 per year over the past three years, 2003–04 and will receive £133,250 this year; and

REACH received £85,000 per year over the past three years, 2001–04 and will receive £87,125 this year.

Project funding of £55,000 per year for three years beginning March 2001 was given to Help and Care, an organisation that supports and encourages older people's role as active citizens within their communities. This came to an end in March 2004.

The Active Community Unit has also contributed funding of £50,000 to the Better Government for Older People Network. This consisted of £20,000 revenue funding in February 2002 and £30,000 capital funding in January 2003.

In April 2004, the Home Office announced that they were going to invest £600,000 over two years to develop a national co-ordinating body for older volunteers.

And finally, during the four years 1999–2003, the Home Office Older Volunteers Initiative provided funding of £1.476 million to 26 projects aimed at improving the number and quality of the opportunities for people aged 50 or over to volunteer and involve themselves in the community.

Overseas Students

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of students admitted to the UK since 1979 have *(a)* completed their studies, *(b)* returned to their home country and *(c)* had their visa extended, broken down by nationality. [177093]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 8 June 2004]:* I regret that the information requested is not available.

We are currently considering a number of ways in which we could address this information gap for future years.

Data on passengers given leave to enter or further leave to remain in the United Kingdom as students by nationality are published in the Command Paper 'Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom'[1]. These data however, relate to the number of journeys/ decisions; a person making more than one journey/ application for an extension of leave to remain may be counted on each occasion.

[1] Obtainable from the Library of the House, and from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/commandpubsl.html. The latest edition is that for 2002 (Cm6053).

Paper Recycling

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of copying paper used by his Department in 2002–03 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained. [172306]

Fiona Mactaggart: The percentage of copying paper used by the Department in 2002–03 from recycled sources was 41.54 per cent.

The post-consumer waste content of the paper was unknown by the supplier as they were unable to provide detail of the wood fibre in the product. The recycled content of the paper is described as unspecified.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when his Department expects to implement in full the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

to ensure that *(a)* all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content and *(b)* all paper for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post-consumer waste. [172307]

Fiona Mactaggart: The quick wins targets were introduced on 1 November 2003 by the inter-departmental Sustainable Procurement Group. From this date all Government Department's contracts were expected to apply the minimum environmental standards when purchasing certain types of product and services including paper.

It has been recommended that the purchase of recycled paper products is phased in over a period of time and targets will be developed as part of the "Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate". The Home Office will work with its current suppliers in order to meet these targets once they are published.

The Department's current three-year stationery contract to supply paper and paper products as well as other stationery products was awarded prior to 1 November, in September 2003. This followed a competitive tender exercise in line with Home Office policy that the procurement of goods and services is based on value for money principles. The provision of recycled paper is part of the agreed contract with Guilbert UK.

In June 2002 the Home Office mandated all offices within the Department to use A4 recycled paper which has an 80 per cent. unspecified recycled paper content in photocopiers, fax machines and printers, unless technical reasons precluded them from using this paper. The Prison Service mandated the use of the same A4 recycled paper from September 2003 and expect the use of A3 recycled paper to become mandatory from September 2004 if current trials prove successful.

The Home Office makes use of various stocks of paper/board in our publications. Most of our internal facing material is printed on recycled paper and all of these are at least 60 per cent. recycled with a content of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste.

The majority of our external facing work is printed on totally chlorine free paper/board. Although this is not made from recycled pulp, this is 'environmentally friendly' because the pulp is bleached without the use of chlorine chemicals.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the Department's main suppliers of *(a)* copier paper, *(b)* stationery, *(c)* envelopes and *(d)* paper for reports, in each case stating (i) the name of each paper used and (ii) the recycled and post-consumer recycled content of each paper. [172308]

Fiona Mactaggart: The contract to supply paper and paper products to the Home Department is held by the company Guilbert UK. In addition to the aforementioned contract the Prison Service also hold a contract with James MacNaughton Paper Group Limited to supply paper and paper products to Prison Service Enterprise and Supply Services Internal Industries.

Guilbert provide a wide range of stationery products to the Home Office and to provide details of every paper and paper product supplied would incur disproportionate costs.

I am however able to provide details of the top ten paper and paper products purchased from Guilbert UK by brand name and where available the recycled and post consumer recycled content of each paper in the categories requested as follows:

Percentage

Name of paper used	*Recycled content (unspecified)*	*Recycled content (post-consumer waste)*	*Recycled content (pre-consumer waste)*
(a) Copier paper			
Environmental 3500 Recycled Paper A4 80gsm	80	0	0
Niceday 3000 Laser Copier A4 80 White	0	0	0
Niceday 6000 A4 80 gsm White	0	0	0
Niceday LaserJet Paper A4 80g HE	5	0	0
Niceday Laser Copier A3 80g White	Not available	Not available	Not available
XxPremier Copier 5500 A4 80g White	Not available	Not available	Not available
Niceday Office Paper A5 80 gsm White	0	0	0
XxPremier Copier 5500 A3 80g White	Not available	Not available	Not available
Niceday 4000 Paper A3 80 gsm White	0	0	0
Niceday Pastel Tinted Paper Pale Yellow	0	0	0
(b) Stationery			
N2 Divider A4 10Part Colour Tabs	0	0	100
N2 Divider A4 5Part Colour Tab	0	0	100
Environmental Divider A4 10Part Colour Tabs	0	0	100
Niceday Notes 3x3 Yellow	0	0	0
Niceday Diary A5 2 w/t/v Black 2004	30	0	0
N2 Divider A4 10Part Extra Wide	0	0	100
N2 Manuscript Book A4 96LF	20	0	0
Environmental Divider A4 5Part colour Tab	0	0	100
EDAY Diary A4 1 D/T/P Black 2004	15	0	0
Niceday Diary A5 1 W/T/V Burgundy 2004	30	0	0

Name of paper used	Recycled content (unspecified)	Recycled content (post-consumer waste)	Recycled content (pre-consumer waste)
			Percentage
(c) Envelopes			
Niceday Envelope 114x162 90 Self Seal White	Not available	—	—
Niceday Envelope 11 0x220 90 Self Seal White	0	0	0
Environmental Envelope 324x229 90 Self seal Buff	0	85	0
Niceday Envelope 324x229115 Self Seal Manila	0	85	0
Environmental Envelope 229x162 90 Self Seal Buff	0	85	0
Environmental Envelope 254x178 90 Manila	0	85	0
Niceday C4 Envelope 324x299115 gsm Manila	Not Available	—	—
Environmental Envelope 324x229 90g Self Seal Buff	0	85	0
Environmental Envelope C5 229x162mm Manila Gummed 90gsm	Not Available	—	—
Environmental Envelope C4 324x229mm Manila Gummed 90g	Not Available	—	—
(d) Paper for reports			
Niceday Duplicator Blue A4 80gsm	0	10	90
Niceday Duplicator Yellow A4 80gsm	0	10	90
Niceday 11x14.5 1PT 70g Pain Laser	0	0	0
HP Premium Plus Photo Paper A4 C6832A	Not available	—	—
Niceday 11x9.5 1PT 70g Plain Micro Vertical Perforations	0	0	0
Niceday 11x14.5 1PT 60g Plain	0	0	0
Niceday Duplicator A4 80g White	0	10	90
Nicely 11x9.5 1PT 60g Plain Micro Vertical Perforations	0	0	0
Niceday Duplicator Green A4 80gsm	0	10	90
Niceday 11x14.5 1PT 60g Music Ruled	0	0	0

Details of the top ten paper and paper products purchased from James MacNaughton Paper Group Limited by brand name and where available the recycled and post consumer recycled content for copier paper is as follows:

Name of paper used	Recycled content (unspecified)	Recycled content (post-consumer waste)	Recycled content (pre-consumer waste)
Challenger T/Pulp	No	No	No
HMP Offset	No	No	No
HM Manila	Yes	No	80%
Reacto	No	No	No
Prosp/Kingstn	No	No	No
Challenger Velvet	No	No	No
Reflex	No	No	No
Challenger W/Pulp	No	No	No
Supercol	No	No	No
Greybd	Yes	100%	No

Seaports/Airports

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff were employed at UK seaports and airports from *(a)* the Immigration Service and *(b)* Special Branch in each of the last five years. [177169]

Mr. Browne: The information is as follows:

(a) The table sets out the number of full-time equivalent immigration officials employed at seaports and airports, as at 1 January for the last five years.

	Immigration staff
1999	2082.4
2000	2124.5
2001	2266.9
2002	2609
2003	3202.94
2004	3176.4

As at 1 June 2004, the UK Immigration Service had posted a further 181 immigration officials and an additional 20 were in training.

(b) The deployment of Special Branch officers at ports within the UK is a decision for the Chief Constable of the policing area concerned after consultation with the National Co-ordinator of Ports Policing. However, it is the Home Office view that it is inappropriate to divulge exact numbers as to do so may impact on the overall counter-terrorist strategy.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures are in place to facilitate cooperation between Customs and Excise, the UK Immigration Service, Special Branch and ports police forces at UK seaports and airports. [177170]

Mr. Browne: The Government are committed to ensuring that Her Majesty's Customs and Excise (HMCE), Special Branches and the Immigration Service work together far more effectively. My right hon. Friends, the Home Secretary and the Chancellor have tasked the Director-General of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate, the Director-General of HMCE Law Enforcement and representatives of the Association of Chief Police Officers to develop more closely aligned objectives and priorities within their individual business plans. The group will report periodically to me and my hon. Friend, the Economic Secretary to the Treasury.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the designated airports and seaports in the UK. [177172]

Mr. Browne: The ports specified in the Schedule to the Immigration (Ports of Entry) Order 1987 are those designated as ports of entry for the purposes of the Immigration Act 1971.

They are:

Seaports and Hoverports

Dover
Felixstowe
Folkestone
Harwich
Hull
London
Newhaven
Plymouth
Portsmouth
Ramsgate
Sheerness
Southampton
Tyne

Airports

Aberdeen
Belfast
Birmingham
Bournemouth (Hurn)
Bristol
Cardiff (Wales)
East Midlands
Edinburgh
Gatwick-London
Glasgow
Heathrow-London
Leeds/Bradford
Liverpool
Luton
Manchester
Newcastle
Norwich
Prestwick
Southampton
Southend
Stansted-London
Teesside

Seasonal Agriculture Workers

Mr. Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people entered the UK under the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme in the five years up to 1 May, broken down by nationality. [176466]

Mr. Browne: The latest information is for 1999 to 2003, and is given in the table.

Passengers given leave to enter the United Kingdom as Seasonal Agricultural Workers, by nationality, 1999 to 2003[2]

United Kingdom — *Number of journeys*

	1999	*2000*	*2001*[1]	*2002*	*2003*[2]
Bulgaria	1,185	1,290	1,100	1,730	1,965
Cyprus	0	[3]—	0	0	[3]—
Czech Republic	270	250	575	520	385
Estonia	115	125	265	305	485
Hungary	95	100	75	100	80
Latvia	290	340	590	985	1,635
Lithuania	1,375	1,255	515	2,090	2,615
Malta	0	0	0	0	0
Other Former USSR	205	420	310	865	1,340
Poland	3,470	3,195	3,760	4,485	6,175
Romania	315	305	125	330	545
Russia	130	215	255	625	1,005
Slovakia	310	365	420	815	845
Switzerland	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	0	0
Turkey	30	25	45	25	55
Ukraine	1,670	1,835	135	3,640	3,235
Yugoslavia	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	5
Croatia	[3]—	0	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Slovenia	[3]—	5	10	5	0
Other Former Yugoslavia	140	125	55	80	60
Others	150	250	150	310	285
Total	9,760	10,105	8,390	16,910	20,715

[1] Data for 2001 may understate the actual arrivals due to data quality issues in recording the entry of persons under the scheme.
[2] Provisional and subject to change. The figures are rounded to the nearest 5.
[3] = 1 or 2.

Statistics (London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what *(a)* public and *(b)* charity funds were spent on tackling drugs misuse in Greater London, broken down by borough, in each year since 1997. [173251]

Caroline Flint: Following the launch of the National Drug Strategy in 1998 (Revised 2002) ring fenced investment in action to tackle drugs has increased significantly. Central drug specific allocations are supplemented by local mainstream and charitable funding. Information related to mainstream and charitable funding would only be available at local level. It would incur a disproportionate cost in staff time to gather these figures and they would be difficult to verify.

The following tables contain the specific allocations for 2003–04 for Greater London by Drug Action Team (DAT) area. The first table shows allocations made to the 12 DATs involved in phase one of the Criminal Justice Intervention Programme, the remaining DATs are shown in the second table.

In order to ensure consistency figures supplied are based on funding streams associated with the National Drug Strategy and are readily verifiable. These funding streams are specifically targeted at tackling the harm caused to individuals, families and communities by the misuse of drugs.

Criminal Justice Intervention Programme—Phase 1 DAT Areas

£

Drug Action Team funding 2003-04	*Partnership capacity*	*Treatment pooled budget*	*Through care after care*	*Capacity building (CJIP)*	*Building safer communities*[1]	*Young people funding (from HO, DH, DfES, YJB)*	*Total*
Camden	68,164	2,465,512	185,776	550,000	433,752	282,082	4,037,366
Ealing	72,034	2,134,853	153,411	450,000	482,911	310,230	3,665,578
Hackney	68,331	2,749,137	208,537	620,000	477,731	401,866	4,602,486

Criminal Justice Intervention Programme—Phase 1 DAT Areas

£

Drug Action Team funding 2003–04	*Partnership capacity*	*Treatment pooled budget*	*Through care after care*	*Capacity building (CJIP)*	*Building safer communities*[1]	*Young people funding (from HO, DH, DfES, YJB)*	*Total*
Haringey	69,246	2,096,310	191,150	550,000	436,722	306,423	3,712,295
Islington	67,701	2,949,923	171,254	500,000	412,195	306,681	4,467,299
Lambeth	70,830	3,266,068	294,591	880,000	608,881	384,130	5,568,538
Newham	69,651	2,984,036	237,809	710,000	482,443	393,991	4,965,540
Southwark	69,601	3,052,379	234,448	700,000	447,767	387,486	4,960,239
Tower Hamlets	67,836	2,731,485	206,476	610,000	401,853	413,798	4,520,560
Waltham Forest	69,262	1,357,159	140,547	420,000	332,903	261,969	2,638,798
Wandsworth	70,857	1,999,794	141,301	420,000	414,147	262,178	3,352,774
Westminster	68,981	3,001,900	135,693	400,000	455,792	218,694	4,323,090

[1] Contains non drug elements

Non Criminal Justice Intervention Programme DAT Areas

£

Drug Action Team funding 2003–04	*Partnership capacity*	*Treatment pooled budget*	*Through care after care Pump priming*	*Building safer communities*[1]	*Young people funding (from HO, DH; DfES, YJB)*	*Total*
Barking & Dagenham	66,916	1,019,384	35,000	245,907	161,959	1,529,165
Barnet	72,926	1,204,614	35,000	389,058	212,636	1,914,234
Bexley	69,154	758,662	35,000	265,446	138,866	1,267,128
Brent	70,296	1,908,709	35,000	404,467	250,322	2,668,794
Bromley	71,989	901,396	35,000	347,094	175,093	1,530,572
City of London	61,680	23,297	35,000	62,723	2,711	185,411
Croydon	73,328	1,564,559	35,000	438,685	241,222	2,352,794
Enfield	70,843	1,458,415	35,000	379,261	201,615	2,145,133
Greenwich	69,027	1,866,717	35,000	347,594	230,189	2,548,528
Hammersmith & Fulham	67,028	1,615,540	35,000	327,080	175,815	2,220,463
Harrow	68,932	688,939	35,000	245,983	132,187	1,171,041
Havering	69,637	711,231	35,000	255,809	142,922	1,214,599
Hillingdon	70,289	1,038,182	35,000	360,823	159,601	1,663,895
Hounslow	68,883	1,040,920	35,000	347,738	173,358	1,665,899
Kensington & Chelsea	67,279	1,998,700	35,000	304,805	151,136	2,556,920
Kingston upon Thames	66,584	724,847	35,000	162,467	90,786	1,079,684
Lewisham	70,011	2,585,933	35,000	374,235	270,355	3,335,534
Merton	67,963	949,061	35,000	211,023	127,253	1,390,300
Redbridge	69,626	929,313	35,000	340,963	160,093	1,534,995
Richmond upon Thames	67,977	755,700	35,000	199,472	94,704	1,152,853
Sutton	67,719	662,225	35,000	192,886	116,324	1,074,154

[1] Contains non drug elements

Surveys

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what surveys of public perceptions of his Department and of its areas of responsibility have taken place over the last 12 months; what the *(a)* title and *(b)* nature of these surveys was; what the findings of each survey were; where these findings have been published; what the cost of such surveys was; and if he will make a statement and place copies of the surveys in the Library. [176952]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office undertakes a wide range of research activities that support the development of information-led policy, including surveys of public perception and focus groups of the public that consider Home Office issues and its related areas of responsibility.

The Department conducts or commissions such work only when it is justified by the specific needs of a particular policy or programme and when this is the most economical, efficient and effective way to achieve the purpose. Consulting and involving the public helps inform both policy formulation and the delivery of better quality public services.

The available information on commissioned projects or surveys of public perception, including where these have been published is shown at Appendix 1. This table has also been placed in the Library. It has not been possible to provide detailed breakdown of costs of projects where this information is either not held centrally or is commercial in confidence.

Websites

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the total annual cost of his Department's websites, including those of its agencies, was in the most recent year for which figures are available. [159520]

Fiona Mactaggart: The details required were answered in a question from Matthew Taylor.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 11 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 235W.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Children's Centres

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will estimate the cost of establishing 1,000 children's centres by 2008. [177651]

Margaret Hodge: The Government are allocating £435 million in the current Spending Review period to develop children's centres and 43,000 new full day care places in disadvantaged areas. Local authorities are responsible for deciding how many centres to develop, but their current plans indicate that around 975 will be operational by March 2006. The Government are committed to establishing 1,700 children's centres by March 2008, serving all of the most disadvantaged areas in England. Funding for this expansion will be announced later in the year.

School Buildings

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what plans he has for *(a)* issuing guidance and *(b)* making it a statutory obligation that existing system built schools should have the level of compartmentation fire protection increased to meet the levels required by the current building regulations; [177591]

(2) what assessment has been made of the fire risk associated with CLASP and SCOLA buildings; and how many schools are constructed in this way; [177592]

(3) what plans he has to change the regulations for upgrading the level of compartmentation fire protection in system built structures such as those of CLASP and SCOLA design. [177593]

Mr. Miliband: Exemption for schools from the Building Regulations ended in April 2001 and since that date all new building work at schools, including system built schools, has been subject to approval under the Building Regulations. The fire safety aspects of the Building Regulations are not retrospective.

The Department is in the process of producing new guidance on fire safety for schools. Building Bulletin 100, "Designing against the risk of fire in Schools", will give guidance on the design of new schools as well as the refurbishment of existing schools to at least the current standards of the Building Regulations. The guide is comprehensive and stresses the value of using risk assessments as the basis for determining, for example, the types of fire alarm and detection systems needed in particular school buildings. It will be aimed at schools, local education authorities (LEAs), design consultants, building control bodies and the fire and rescue service. It is likely, subject to consultation, that the forthcoming revised Approved Document B accompanying the Building Regulations will refer to this guide for fire safety standards in schools.

The Department does not have figures for how many schools were constructed using the CLASP or SCOLA systems. However, all LEAs have produced asset management plans covering all the maintained schools in their areas. These surveyed the condition, suitability and sufficiency of school buildings, and should have highlighted and prioritised any apparent health and safety problems associated with them. Fire safety issues would have been included and any obvious risks should have been addressed.

The Department's primary concern is for the safety of pupils, teachers and other users. Regulation 17 of the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 requires that every part of a school building, and of the land provided for a school, shall be such that the safe escape of the occupants in case of fire is reasonably assured. Schools also covered by the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and by subsequent related regulations. These include aspects of fire safety.

11-year-olds (Crosby)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of 11-year-old students in Crosby area schools achieved expected levels in *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* reading in the latest year for which figures are available. [177940]

Mr. Miliband: The number and percentage of pupils in Crosby who reached Level 4 or above at Key Stage 2 in *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* reading in 2003 are:

	Number/ Percentage
Mathematics	
Crosby Number of pupils achieving Level 4 +	822
Crosby Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 +	86
England Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 +	73
Reading	
Crosby Number of pupils achieving Level 4 +	860
Crosby Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 +	90
England Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 +	81

A/AS Levels

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average A/AS points score per examination entry was *(a)* in Sefton and *(b)* in the United Kingdom in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [177837]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is shown in table 1.

Table 1: average point score per GCE A/AS entry (or vocational equivalent) 1999–2003

	Sefton	*England*
1999	4.9	5.4
2000	4.9	5.5
2001	4.8	5.5
2002	67.9	76.0
2003	69.7	77.4

The points awarded for each grade are described in table 2. In 2002, the point scores were changed to reflect the new UCAS tariff. An AS level counts as half an A level.

Table 2

Grade	*Points prior to 2002*	*Points since 2002*
A	10	120
B	8	100
C	6	80
D	4	60
E	2	40

I welcome the rising trend in national performance. This is of course a reflection of the hard work of students and the quality of their teachers.

Building Schools for the Future

Mr. Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will take steps to allow *(a)* sixth-form colleges and *(b)* further education colleges to apply for funding under the Building Schools for the Future Programme; and if he will make a statement. [176821]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* Capital investment through Building Schools for the Future (BSF) is allocated for schools, rather than sixth-form colleges or further education colleges. However, the Government have recently committed their self to separate increases in post-16 learning and skills sector capital investment. Capital funds allocated to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) will increase to over £400 million in 2005–06. This is an increase of over 60 per cent. in real terms when compared to 2002–03.

We are currently working closely with the LSC to join up investment for schools, sixth-form colleges and further education colleges. We are also encouraging local authorities and local LSCs to consult each other in formulating their proposals and plans for priority capital funding.

Careers Education and Guidance

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how he plans to ensure that impartial careers education and guidance are provided to all 13 to 19-year-olds as the wider range of options at Key Stage Four and beyond become available. [175852]

Margaret Hodge: Responsibility for the provision of careers education and guidance to 13 to 19-year-olds in England rests with schools and the Connexions Service. As the wider range of options at Key Stage Four and beyond becomes available, it will be important that STET young people are able to access good information and advice.

We are currently undertaking a review to ensure to have appropriate arrangements in place which make sense in the new environment created by the reforms outlined in "Every Child Matters" and the development of children's trust.

Child Care

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many children in Stoke-on-Trent, North have benefited from the National Childcare Strategy; and if he will make a statement; [177641]

(2) how many child care places have been created in Stoke-on-Trent, North since 1997. [177644]

Margaret Hodge: The Department is unable to provide details of child care places for Stoke-on-Trent, North. However, from April 1999 to March 2004, Stoke-on-Trent local authority created 3,660 new child care places helping some 6,451 children. This shows an increase in the stock of child care places, taking into account turnover of 2,169 helping some 3,895 children.

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what qualifications in childcare are necessary *(a)* to be a registered childminder, *(b)* to work in a day nursery, *(c)* to work in a nursery school or class and *(d)* to work in a pre-school play group; and if he will make a statement. [177522]

Margaret Hodge: The national standards for under 8s day care and childminding require that:

a childminder has completed a local authority approved childminder's pre-registration course and a first aid course within six months of commencing childminding;

the manager in a registered day care setting, including pre-schools, play groups and day nurseries, and all supervisors where full day care is provided, have at least a level 3 qualification appropriate to the post;

at least half of all other staff in a day care setting should hold a level 2 qualification appropriate for the care or development of children.

Staff employed in a teaching capacity in a nursery school or nursery class in a maintained school, should have Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

Children's Health

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to introduce specialist training for teachers on children's health issues. [177648]

Mr. Miliband: We do not prescribe any specialist training for teachers on children's health issues. We are however developing a common core of skills, knowledge and competence for members of the children and young people's workforce, including teachers, which will include safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We will consider in consultation with our partners how the common core will relate to initial teacher training, induction for newly qualified teachers and existing arrangements for professional development.

Class Sizes (Brighton and Hove)

Mr. Lepper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children were in classes of 31 or more in infant schools and infant classes in primary schools in Brighton and Hove in each year since 1996–97. [176574]

Margaret Hodge: The available data is shown in the table.

Maintained primary schools[1]: number of pupils in key stage 1 classes of 31 or more pupils taught by one teacher. 1998–2004 (provisional); position in January each year. Brighton and Hove Local Education Authority[2]

	Total pupils in all classes	Number of pupils in classes of 31 or more: Number of pupils	Number of pupils in classes of 31 or more: Percentage of pupils[3]
1998	7,080	3,422	48.3
1999	6,988	2,811	40.2
2000	6,709	2,262	33.7
2001	6,517	408	6.3
2002	6,432	0	0.0
2003	6,353	32	0.5
2004[4]	6,795	31	0.5

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.

[2] Brighton and Hove became a unitary authority in April 1997 as a result of local government reorganisation.

[3] Percentage of pupils in those classes expressed as a percentage of pupils in all classes taught by one teacher.

[4] Provisional.

Source:

Annual Schools' Census.

Final 2004 figures will be published in September.

Computers in Schools

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many computers each school in *(a)* Leyton and Wanstead, *(b)* the London Borough of Redbridge and *(c)* the London Borough of Waltham Forest has for the education of pupils; and how many each had in 1997. [178191]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is not available centrally.

Figures for England, which were derived from a sample of schools, are shown in the table.

Average number of computers per school (used solely or mainly for teaching and learning purposes) by type of school, England

Position as at 31 March:	Primary	Maintained Secondary	Special
1997	n/a	n/a	n/a
1998	13.3	100.9	18.5
2003	28.6	192.7	31.3

n/a = not available.

The latest available information on ICT in schools was published in Statistical Bulletin, "Survey of Information and Communications Technology in Schools 2003", which is available on the Department's website: www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils per computer there were in schools in *(a)* Merseyside and *(b)* Crosby in each year since 1996. [177865]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is not available centrally.

Figures for England, which were derived from a sample of schools, are shown in the table.

Average number of pupils[1] per computer (used solely or mainly for teaching and learning purposes) by type of school, England

Year end March:	Primary	Maintained Secondary	Special
1996	19.0	9.0	4.0
1997	n/a	n/a	n/a
1998	17.6	8.7	4.5
1999	13.4	8.4	3.7
2000	12.6	7.9	3.7
2001	11.8	7.1	3.2
2002	10.1	6.5	3.4
2003	7.9	5.4	3.0

n/a = not available.

[1] Full-time equivalent numbers of pupils.

The latest information on ICT in schools was published in Statistical Bulletin, "Survey of Information and Communications Technology in Schools 2003", which is available on my Department's website: www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/

Departmental Administration Budgets

Mr. Oliver Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what progress has been made towards the 5 per cent. reduction in real terms in his Department's administration budget by 2008 announced by the Chancellor in the House on 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 331. [176500]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The real terms reduction of 5 per cent. or more will be a central feature of the public spending settlements for 2006–08 to be announced in detail later this year. Within the overall settlement for education announced in the Budget, the administration costs of the DfES will be reduced by more than 5 per cent. in real terms over the spending review period.

Departmental Policies (Stroud)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will set out, with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to the Stroud constituency, the effect of changes to departmental policy since 1997 on the Stroud constituency. [174834]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The constituency of Stroud falls within Gloucestershire Local Education Authority. Where the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) can or does collect information by constituency, it has been provided.

Additional information could only be provided at disproportionate cost. However, my Department is investigating ways in which we disseminate information about the effects of our policies at a local level. We hope to have systems to facilitate this in place later this year.

Children, Young People and Families

Early Education

All three and four year olds throughout England are now guaranteed a free, part time, Government funded early education place if their parents want it. We understand that around 99 per cent. of four year olds, and over 94 per cent. of three year olds, are currently benefiting from some level of free early education in Gloucestershire.

Childcare

There has been a major expansion in childcare provision since 1997. We only have figures at local authority level, but at March 2004 we had created over 15,864 new childcare places in Gloucestershire since April 1999, benefiting 27,688 children. The current stock of childcare places (16,695) provides 16 childcare places per 100 children which is above the national average.

Children's Social Services

Children's social services in the constituency are delivered by Gloucestershire County Council. Gloucestershire is a two star social services authority with services for children and families assessed as serving most children well with promising prospects for improvement, which are higher ratings than were awarded in 2002. These judgements are set out in the annual review of Performance Ratings for Social Services in England published by the Chief Inspector of the Social Services Inspectorate in November 2003.

Disadvantaged Area Programmes

The Stroud constituency contains one Mini Sure Start Local Programme providing services for an identified 'pocket of deprivation' across Cam and Dursley. One Neighbourhood Nursery has opened in the constituency providing 50 full day care places, with another due to open in June 2004 which will offer a further 61 places.

Gloucestershire County Council intends to create six children's centres building on existing provision, including two Sure Start Local Programmes in Cheltenham and Gloucester. The Council is not currently developing plans for a centre within the Stroud constituency, but it is working on ways of ensuring a consistent approach across 'pockets of deprivation' to ensure all children and families in all neediest parts of the County receive the same high standard of integrated early years support.

Connexions

Connexions, the Government's front line support service for all young people aged 13–19, is providing advice, guidance and support to young people in the Stroud constituency through Gloucestershire Connexions Partnership. Since its launch in April 2002 young people aged 13–19 have had access to support and advice on a range of issues to help them participate and achieve in education, employment and training and to reach their full potential as adults.

Youth Services

There is one local authority youth service in Gloucestershire The service was the subject of an Ofsted inspection in March 1998 and assessed to be a 'good' service. The service has fully embraced the Transforming Youth Work agenda.

Extended Schools

The Department is funding two delivery strands to support the development of extended schools. Gloucestershire is due to receive both strands in 2005–06 subject to the detailed allocations of resources from the outcome of the current Spending Review.

Schools

Recurrent Funding

The estimated[1] increase in per pupil funding in real terms from 1997–98 to 2004–05, is £740 in Gloucestershire compared with the national average of £880.

Capital Funding

Gloucestershire LEA had an allocation of £28.5 million (including £8.3 million which is devolved directly to schools and £2.7 million in Targeted Capital funding) for 2003–04 compared with £12.2 million in 1996–97. Gloucestershire LEA has been allocated £34.6 million for 2004–05 (including £5 million in Targeted Capital funding). Some VA allocations have still to be included for 2004–05.

School Performance Tables

Key Stage (KS) figures can be found on the DfES website at: www.dfes.gov.uk/performancetables

Class Sizes

In Gloucestershire LEA the number of five, six and seven year olds in classes over 30 has fallen from 4,975 in 1997 to 156 by January 2003.

Teachers

In Gloucestershire LEA the number of teachers has risen by 670 (FTE from 1997 to 2003). There are 285 more teaching assistants and 821 more support staff than in 1997.

Specialist Schools

There are six specialist schools in the parliamentary constituency of Stroud and 27 specialist schools in Gloucestershire LEA.

Education Action Zones

Gloucester EAZ started in January 2000, and covers 25 schools: three secondary; 20 primary schools; one special school and one pupil referral unit. Gloucester EAZ transforms into an Excellence Cluster in January 2005.

Results

Between 2000–2003, there was no recorded improvement in those pupils that attended EAZ schools achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs (30 per cent. in both years). The LEA average improved by 4 points.

Between 2000–2003, there was a significant improvement in pupils' performance at Key Stage 3. Those achieving Level 5+ in English, Maths and Science and attending EAZ schools rose by 20; 9 and 11 points respectively. The LEA average improved by 3; 5 and 9 points respectively.

Between 2000–2003, pupils attending EAZ schools achieving L4+ in English, Maths and Science at Key Stage 2 rose by 1; 3 and 8 points respectively. The LEA average improved by 1; 4 and 4 points respectively.

Between 2000–2003, pupils attending EAZ schools achieving L2+ in Reading, Writing and Maths only rose in Reading (4 points);

achievement remained the same in the other subjects. The LEA average improved by 2 points in Reading, 1 point in Maths, but decreased by 2 points in Writing.

Beacon Schools

There are two beacon schools in the parliamentary constituency of Stroud and 15 beacon schools in Gloucestershire LEA.

Primary Strategy Leadership

Forty seven primary schools in Gloucestershire LEA are taking part in the Primary Strategy Leadership programme this year. Additional schools will be selected by the LEA to enter the programme in 2004–05.

Leadership Incentive Grant

Five Gloucestershire schools receive the Leadership Incentive Grant totalling £754,000 in the 2004–05 financial year. There are no schools in Stroud which meet the eligibility criteria for this grant.

Behaviour Improvement Projects

All secondary schools in Gloucestershire receive support from the Behaviour and Attendance strand of the Key Stage 3 Strategy, including a behaviour audit and training materials as well as support from specialist LEA-level consultants.

14–19 Education

The Government's strategy for 14–19 education and training, set out in 14–19:

> 'opportunity and excellence', will provide all young people with the opportunity to continue their education in different settings, including schools, colleges, and the workplace.

The impact of the 14–19 agenda on Stroud includes:

16–19 Area Inspection (14–19 from March 2003)

Gloucestershire as it is not a borough that has had an Area Inspection.

Strategic Area Reviews (StARs)

In April 2003, all local Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs) started strategic area reviews (StARs) of post-16 LSC-funded provision. These reviews aim to achieve the right mix of provision in an area to improve participation, raise attainment and improve learner choice. StARs will ensure that there is the breadth of opportunity and quality of provision to meet the needs of learners, employers and communities.

All local LSCs have been gathering information, reviewing provider missions, and consequently building an understanding of each provider's role and the provision on offer. The next step is to develop strategic options.

In the case of LSC Gloucestershire, good progress has been made locally on StAR. The data gathering and analysis phase has been completed and used to identify the particular issues in Stroud district. This has enabled work to begin on developing strategic options. These will be discussed with a cross section of partners and stakeholders within Stroud at a district event in June.

It is anticipated that those attending will support the LSC in making sure all of the issues have been identified and provide input to build on the emerging options.

The outcome of this process will be a final set of strategic options that will be launched for consultation later in the year with a final set of options in place within the next local annual plan in the spring of 2005.

Vocational Provision

Learners in the Stroud area have access to 14 work based learning providers—they cover a wide range of vocational programmes covering occupational areas/ sectors which are significant to the sub regional economy including hotels and restaurants, warehousing and distribution, construction, business and administration, health and care, engineering and retail. The programmes are available through Entry to Employment, and Level 2 and Advanced Apprenticeships [Level 3] and include opportunities for learners with social and learning needs.

In addition, Stroud College has worked in conjunction with eleven secondary schools and two specialist educational institutions to offer Year 10 and 11 pupils a range of high quality vocational programmes since September 2002. There are currently approx. 300 students on the programme. These have been jointly funded by the LSC, through the Increased Flexibility Initiative and by participating schools and Stroud College. A partnership steering group was formed at the outset and this meets on a termly basis to monitor and review the success of the programmes. Over the next two years it is planned to build on the achievements of the initiatives to date, focussing on the quality of teaching and learning, improving communication between all partners and building clear progression routes for students over the 14–19 age range.

Educational Maintenance Allowances

There are no EMA pilots in the Gloucestershire LEA area.

Higher Education

The number of 18–20 year olds permanently resident in Gloucester LEA accepted through UCAS to full-time first degree Higher Education courses (degree, HMD or foundation degree), are as follows:

Gloucester LEA

	Number
1997	2,631
1998	2,618
1999	2,601
2000	2,748
2001	2,721
2002	2,832

Adult Education

The Local Labour Force Survey shows that in Stroud:

> The proportion of working age people qualified to at least level four has fallen from 30.5 per cent. in 1999 to 23.2 per cent. in 2002.
>
> The proportion of working age people qualified to at least level 2 has risen from 66.0 per cent. in 1999 to 68.3 per cent. in 2002.
>
> The proportion of working age people without any qualification has fallen from 12.2 per cent. in 1999 to 11.0 per cent. in 2002.

The proportion of working age people who received job related training in the last four weeks fell from 17.3 per cent. in 1999 to 11.0 per cent. in 2002.

[1] Includes provisional estimates of grants and allocations still to be confirmed. Total funding per pupil aged 3–19 includes Education Formula Spending (EPS) and all relevant grants in the DfES departmental Expenditure Limits but, for comparability, exclude the pensions transfer to Learning and Skills Council and EFS in 2003–04 and 2004–05. Real terms at 2002–03 prices.

Devon LEA

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the cost of school transport in Devon Local Education Authority was in each of the last seven years. [164788]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is contained in the following table:

Cost of home to school/college transport

£000

	Gross transport expenditure	Transport related parental contributions	Net transport expenditure
1996–97	14,200	518	13,682
1997–98	15,379	581	14,798
1998–99	13,866	534	13,332
1999–2000	14,337	554	13,784
2000–01	15,118	543	14,575
2001–02	13,972	580	13,392
2002–03	19,319	557	18,761

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from Devon LEA's Section 52 Outturn Statement submitted to the DfES from 1999–2000 onwards and the ODPM's RO1 statement previously. 2002–03 data is subject to change by the LEA. Figures are in £000s in cash terms.
2. Figures up to and including 1997–98 are for Devon LEA prior to local government reorganisation. From 1998–99 onwards parts of Devon LEA became Plymouth LEA and Torbay LEA.
3. Total transport expenditure and parental contributions includes that incurred in relation to pre-primary, primary, secondary and special school education as well as in education out of school, continuing education and the management and support elements.

Easy to Read Publications

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will take steps to increase the number of books, magazines and newspapers available in large print, audio, Braille and electronic formats accessible to people with a visual impairment, dyslexia or other reading disability; and if he will make a statement. [176682]

Margaret Hodge: We are already taking a number of steps to ensure this issue is addressed. We have extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 to include duties on local authorities and education institutions to improve access for disabled learners. Over £600 million will be made available over the period 2001–02 to 2005–06 to support access improvements. Officials at the Department of Trade and Industry have been in discussion with the Right to Read Alliance and the Publishers Association about the possibility of a central deposit of electronic versions of all new material published in this country. Officials have worked with the RNIB and copyright owners to reduce delays in gaining copyright clearance, when making accessible copies of printed materials and supported the establishment of the Reveal database which provides information about accessible resources.

Education Support Staff (Greater London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many education support staff there were in Greater London in each of the last 10 years, broken down by borough. [176830]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* The following table shows the full-time equivalent number of support staff employed in local education authorities in the Greater London area for each year between 1994 and 2003, the latest information available.

Support staff employed in local education authorities in Greater London

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
London	16,760	16,750	17,990	19,100	20,000	21,500	23,600	27,000	31,000	32,300
City of London[1]	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	—	10
Camden	440	420	460	490	520	540	580	670	750	750
Greenwich	580	630	700	730	770	800	900	1,080	1,220	1,220
Hackney	470	450	460	490	520	530	620	710	830	900
Hammersmith and Fulham	330	350	370	390	400	390	470	490	590	590
Islington	440	440	470	480	470	510	580	640	720	770
Kensington and Chelsea	250	260	290	310	300	310	340	370	400	430
Lambeth	660	680	700	690	730	780	890	980	1,110	1,090
Lewisham	570	550	600	650	700	770	830	930	1,050	1,150
Southwark	630	630	710	760	830	890	1,050	1,190	1,320	1,360
Tower Hamlets	690	710	810	850	870	950	1,020	1,290	1,570	1,520
Wandsworth	810	750	760	770	840	850	960	980	1,090	1,170
Westminster	360	370	350	370	390	410	410	450	610	600
Barking and Dagenham	420	440	490	540	560	580	590	700	790	820
Barnet	700	720	780	810	860	920	990	1,090	1,270	1,220
Bexley	400	420	470	510	550	640	710	780	920	1,000
Brent	510	500	540	600	640	710	760	840	960	930
Bromley	550	520	570	630	660	720	780	900	990	1,090
Croydon	740	780	860	910	920	1,020	1,090	1,280	1,420	1,440
Ealing	700	620	630	680	700	740	790	920	1,030	1,040
Enfield	560	580	650	730	790	850	940	1,080	1,330	1,460
Haringey	600	600	590	630	640	670	700	830	1,010	1,040
Harrow	520	510	550	570	580	600	650	700	760	800
Havering	430	490	550	580	580	640	700	770	870	960
Hillingdon	700	680	750	800	870	900	980	1,110	1,250	1,290
Hounslow	580	560	590	630	620	650	690	770	880	870
Kingston upon Thames	280	290	310	330	340	370	410	450	510	580
Merton	390	380	400	420	450	490	500	580	660	660
Newham	520	590	630	700	760	940	1,190	1,520	1,740	2,010
Redbridge	560	510	570	600	640	700	830	920	1,080	1,140

Support staff employed in local education authorities in Greater London

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Richmond upon Thames	270	270	290	290	310	310	320	350	410	420
Sutton	330	360	380	420	450	500	50	590	660	700
Waltham Forest	740	660	710	740	780	810	860	1,020	1,170	1,230

[1] City of London did not make a return in 2002

Note:
Includes maintained and non-maintained special schools.

Source:
Annual Schools Census

Educational Standards

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many and what percentage of pupils in Greater London, broken down by local education authority, reached the *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* English standard in each of the last seven years; [177043]

(2) how many and what percentage of 11-year-old pupils in Greater London, broken down by local education authority, reached level four in *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* English in each of the last seven years. [177044]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested has been placed in the Library. The table includes the figures for English, mathematics and science for all local education authorities in England, 1997–2003.

Excellence in Cities

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Stoke-on-Trent, North have benefited from the Excellence in Cities programme; and what the per pupil spending was in each year since the programme's inception. [177640]

Mr. Miliband: The table shows the number of children in Stoke-on-Trent North benefiting from EiC, and the annual spend per pupil for the years in question.

£

	Number of children	Total EiC expenditure[1]	Spend per pupil
2000–01	4,742	263,890	55.65
2001–02	4,673	483,160	103.39
2002–03	4,799	511,690	106.62
2003–04	4,799	1,845,670	384.59

[1] All funding figures supplied by Stoke on Trent Excellence in Cities Team

Failing Schools (Surrey)

Virginia Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in Surrey have been classified as failing in each year since 1996–97. [177268]

Mr. Miliband: This is a matter for Ofsted. HM Chief Inspector, David Bell, will write to the right hon. Member and place a copy of his letter in the Library.

GCSEs

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of 15 and 16-year-olds in Greater London, broken down by local education authority, achieved five or more GCSEs at grade A*-C or GNVQ equivalent in each of the last seven years. [177045]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested has been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) whether vocational GCSE grades are included when calculating the average point scores of pupils in England; [177669]

(2) what the average point score of GCSE pupils was in England over the past five years. [177667]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is as follows:

The first GCSEs in vocational subjects will be taken this summer and the point scores will be included in the 2004 performance tables.

The average point score[1] of 15[2]-year-old pupils

Academic year	England
1999	38.1
2000	38.9
2001	39.3
2002	40.1
2003	40.9

[1] The figures include GCSE average point scores and GNVQ equivalencies.

[2] Pupils are aged 15 at the start of the academic year ie 31 August.

Head Teachers

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what representations the Government have received about the mandatory requirement for head teachers to join the General Teaching Council; and if he will make a statement. [178052]

Mr. Miliband: As far as I am aware, the Government have not received any formal representations on this matter. The present facts are that any qualified teacher, whether they be classroom teachers or part of the senior management team, are required to register with the GTC and that all head teachers are currently required to have Qualified Teacher Status.

Implementation Review Unit

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the *(a)* start-up costs and *(b)* projected running costs for the next three financial years are of the Implementation Review Unit. [177604]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 10 June 2004]:* The start-up costs of the Implementation Review Unit were £108,473.

In 2003–04, the actual running cost of the Implementation Review Unit was £348,967. For 2004–05, the Implementation Review Unit has a budget of up to £500,000. Budgets beyond April 2005 have not been decided yet.

Key Stage 2

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of primary schools has achieved 100 per cent. of its pupils reaching Level 4 in reading in the Key Stage 2 SAT tests. [177272]

Mr. Miliband: In the 2003 National Curriculum assessment tests for Key Stage 2, 9.7 per cent. of schools achieved 100 per cent. of its pupils reaching Level 4 or above.

Learning Disabilities

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discussions his Department is holding on learning disabilities in children. [176817]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 10 June 2004]:* Ministers and officials from my Department regularly meet organisations which represent learning disabled children and their families to ensure that their interests are reflected in the development of our policies for children. The Department's Board of Stakeholders, which I chair, includes the Director of the Council for Disabled Children (CDC) and the Chair of the Special Educational Consortium, which represents a large number of voluntary organisations in the learning disability field.

Many of these organisations responded to the Green Paper "Every Child Matters" and my ministerial colleague Baroness Ashton recently met representatives of the CDC, the Disability Rights Commission and the Learning Disability Task Force, on which the Department is represented, to discuss the implementation of Every Child Matters with regard to the needs of disabled children.

The new special educational needs (SEN) strategy "Removing Barriers to Achievement", which we published in February, will complement Every Child Matters and the Children Bill. It puts forward a strategy to improve provision for all children with SEN, including those with learning disabilities. It is a long-term strategy which was developed after discussions with a number of organisations, including ones which represent the interests of children with learning disabilities and we will involve such groups as the strategy develops. For example, we will be working with the voluntary sector to develop practical tools for involving children, including those with learning disabilities, in decisions about their own education and local SEN services.

The strategy also complements other relevant policies, where we are also working with learning disability organisations. For example, we are working with them on the Children's National Service Framework through the External Working Group on disabled children and the Working Group on 14–19 reform is consulting these groups through an SEN and Equal Opportunities sub group. The Department will continue to work with the voluntary sector so that children with learning disabilities are provided with the services which will give them the opportunity to realise their potential.

Mathematics

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students who studied mathematics at *(a)* GCSE, *(b)* A-Level and *(c)* degree level went on to (i) teach mathematics in schools and (ii) pursue other careers in each of the last five years. [172630]

Mr. Miliband: The exact information requested is not held centrally, but latest figures from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) show that 94 per cent. of newly qualified PGCE students in 2001/02 who had undergraduate degrees in mathematics entered employment as teaching professionals.

Pupil Funding

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding was spent per pupil in Blackpool, North and Fleetwood in each of the last seven years. [176206]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is submitted to the Department according to local education authority areas rather than constituency level and as such the figures provided are for Blackpool LEA.

Net current expenditure

£

	Pre-primary education	*Primary education*	*Pre-primary and primary*	*Secondary education*	*Special*
1996–97	n/a	n/a	1,800	2,590	15,990
1997–98	n/a	n/a	1,820	2,630	17,320
1998–99	n/a	n/a	1,900	2,510	15,270
1999–2000	0	2,160	2,240	2,810	13,810
2000–01	0	2,310	2,320	3,030	20,700
2001–02	0	2,670	2,900	3,320	16,280
2002–03	—	2,840	—	3,430	—

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from local education authorities' section 52 Outturn Statement submitted to the DfES from 1999–2000 onwards and the ODPM's RO1 statement previously. 2002–03 data subject to change by the LEA. Expenditure was not distinguished between pre-primary and primary sectors until the inception of the section 52 outturn statement in 1999–2000. Hence, for consistency, the combined unit cost is provided since 1996–97 but due to problems outlined below (in footnote 4) the unit cost for primary education is a more robust measure.
2. Prior to local government reorganisation (LGR) in 1998–99 Blackpool LEA was part of Lancashire LEA. Consequently figures for 1996–97 and 1997–98 are for pre-LGR Lancashire LEA and figures for 1998–99 onwards are for Blackpool LEA.
3. Spending in 1997–98 reflects the transfer of monies from local government to central Government for the nursery vouchers scheme. These were returned to local government from 1998–99. 1999–2000 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance.
4. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector.

Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they include an apportionment of LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers. Figures are rounded to the nearest £10.
5. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEA.
6. The NCE per pupil figures for pre-primary and primary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in the pre-primary sector and maintained primary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained nursery and primary schools sector. Blackpool LEA has no maintained nursery schools but does spend a significant amount of money on the pre-primary sector (around £2.8 million in 2001–02). This additional expenditure on the pre-primary sector has the effect of inflating the combined pre-primary/primary unit cost as it includes expenditure on both pre-primary and primary education divided only by the pupils in maintained primary schools.
7. The NCE per pupil figures for secondary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained secondary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained secondary schools sector.
8. The NCE per pupil figures for special schools relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained special schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained special schools sector.
9. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

Pupil Referral Units

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the *(a)* total cost and *(b)* average cost per attendee was of pupil referral units in each of the last three years. [165473]

Mr. Miliband: The available information is contained within the following table. Since we do not collect expenditure information about PRUs alone, we cannot calculate a unit cost:

Net current expenditure on education out of school

	Net current expenditure (£)	*Pupils attending PRUs*
2000–01	211,149,747	9,019
2001–02	225,309,786	9,734
2002–03	244,210,864	11,322

Notes:
1. The financial data are taken from local education authorities' Section 52 Outturn Statements submitted to the DfES. 2002–03 data is subject to change by the LEA.
2. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.
3. Education out of school includes any provision for pupils who because of exclusion, illness or other reasons receive education out of school settings; the implementation of behaviour support plans; home-tuition; individual teaching of sick children in hospital; education in social service establishments; and expenditure on Pupil Referral Units (PRUs).
4. The count of pupils attending PRUs excludes those pupils who are also registered at a mainstream or special school.

School Funding

Claire Ward: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much Government spending there was on each *(a)* primary school pupil and *(b)* secondary school pupil in Watford in (i) 1997 and (ii) 2004. [171884]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is submitted to the Department according to local education authority areas rather than districts within an area. Watford is a district of Hertfordshire Local Education Authority. The information for Hertfordshire LEA is as follows:

Net current expenditure per pupil

£

	Primary education	*Pre-primary and primary education*	*Secondary education*
1997–98	n/a	1,850	2,670
1998–99	n/a	1,990	2,800
1999–2000	2,060	2,110	2,770
2000–01	2,240	2,310	2,950
2001–02	2,520	2,590	3,250
2002–03	2,800	2,880	3,550

Notes:
1. The financial data are taken from Hertfordshire LEA's Section 52 outturn statement submitted to the DfES from 1999–2000 onwards and the ODPM's RO1 statement previously. Spending in 1997–98 reflects the transfer of monies from local government to central Government for the nursery vouchers scheme. These were returned to local government in 1998–99. 1999–2000 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance. Expenditure was not distinguished between pre-primary and primary sectors until the inception of the Section 52 outturn statement in 1999–2000.
2. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they include an apportionment of LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers. 2002–03 data is subject to change by the LEA and is the latest data available. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
3. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEA.
4. The NCE per pupil figures for pre-primary and primary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in the pre-primary sector and maintained primary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained nursery and primary schools sector.
5. The NCE per pupil figures for secondary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained secondary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained secondary schools sector.
6. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

School Meals

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when Ofsted will publish its report on school meal provision. [177647]

Mr. Miliband: This is a matter for Ofsted. HM Chief Inspector, David Bell, will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of his letter in the Library.

School Sports

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money has been invested in Stoke-on-Trent North to build long-term school sports facilities since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [177636]

Mr. Miliband: We do not hold information in the form requested. The bulk of capital funding is allocated to local education authorities and schools by formula and it is for them to invest this funding to meet priorities identified in their local asset management plan.

We do not hold allocation information at constituency level, but the table shows total capital funding allocated to Stoke-on-Trent.

Stoke LEA capital allocations

£000

	Amount
1997–98	1,381
1998–99	4,629
1999–2000	[1]97,773
2000–01	9,154
2001–02	10,510
2002–03	11,598
2003–04	11,333
2004–05	13,825

[1] Includes £93 million in Private Finance Initiative credits.

Secondary Schools (Kent)

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent assessment he has made of the arrangements for parents in Kent to choose secondary schools; and if he will make a statement. [177997]

Mr. Miliband: At the request of Kent local education authority, the Secretary of State imposed a co-ordinated admissions scheme on the Kent area on 9 September 2003. The scheme is primarily about the admissions process, rather than admission arrangements for individual schools, and it will remain in place until the LEA and schools agree on a replacement scheme. As the scheme is administered by the LEA, it, along with the schools in the area, is best placed to evaluate the way it has worked and we are keen to hear their assessment of this. We will, therefore, be asking the LEA for statistical data and feedback when its administration of the main part of the process is complete for this year.

Special Educational Needs

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many hours of training qualified teachers receive in relation to identifying, managing and teaching special educational needs in *(a)* primary schools and *(b)* secondary schools per year; what requirements exist for such training to be provided; and if he will make a statement. [177513]

Mr. Miliband: Qualified teachers are expected to identify their development needs through performance management arrangements and to address identified needs, including improving their teaching skills in the area of special education needs, by undertaking appropriate professional development.

Information on take-up of professional development by teachers is not collected centrally.

Statistics

Virginia Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will estimate the *(a)* number and *(b)* average pay of (i) teachers and (ii) all other education staff in (A) 1997, (B) now and (C) 2011. [177370]

Mr. Miliband: The information available is given in the following table. The table shows the full-time equivalent (FTE) number of teachers, teachers' average salary and FTE numbers of support staff in maintained schools in England in each of the years. Information on school support staff pay is not collected centrally. Estimates of the number and average pay of teachers and other education support staff in 2011 have not been made.

	Teachers (number)	*Teacher average salary[1] (£)*	*Support staff (number)*
1997	399,200	21,770	136,500
2002	419,600	28,720	217,000
2004[2]	427,800	—	241,700

[1] Teachers in England and Wales. 2002 is the most recent year for which pay data are available.
[2] Provisional data.

Source:
Annual 618G survey, Database of Teacher Records and Annual Schools Census.

Sure Start

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what account he is taking of the new Index of Multiple Deprivation in decisions relating to the roll-out of Sure Start projects. [177702]

Margaret Hodge: It is important that the future implementation of Sure Start Children's Centres is based on the most up to date information on deprivation. The Sure Start Unit has commissioned analysis to help consider how to use the new Index of Multiple of Deprivation so we continue to target the most disadvantaged children and families effectively. This work should be complete by the early autumn.

Teacher Recruitment

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people joined the teaching profession after university in 2003; and what plans he has to increase the number of people interested in joining the teaching profession. [176815]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 10 June 2004]:* Between March 2001 and March 2002, 18,200 newly qualified teachers entered full-time or part-time service in the maintained sector in England. These teachers gained qualified teacher status in calendar year 2001 either through an initial teacher training course or other approved route. A further 10,100 entered service in the maintained sector for the first time having qualified before 2001. This is the latest information available.

There are a number of schemes designed to encourage people to consider teaching as a potential career option. These range from taster schemes that give people the opportunity to work in a classroom environment before making a commitment to financial incentives such as Golden Hello and Training Bursaries. Thanks to the continued success of these and other schemes, teacher numbers are at their highest level since 1981. The Government remain committed to attracting good quality people into teaching and encouraging them to remain in the profession.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 15 June 2004

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Departmental Initiatives

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the *(a)* budget, *(b)* expenditure and *(c)* amount spent on administration was for each area-based initiative for which her Department and its predecessors have been responsible in each year since 1997. [177108]

Alun Michael: The information is as follows:

1. *Warm Zones*

DEFRA and DTI jointly contributed £0.5 million each towards the pilot programme of five Warm Zones to run from 2001–04, which brings together a range of public and private sector funding. An independent evaluation of the pilots is being carried out by the Energy Saving Trust on behalf of DEFRA. Final results of the evaluation are expected at the end of 2004.

2. *Market Towns Initiative*

£37 million has been provided to the Regional Development Agencies and the Countryside Agency since 2000 to reinvigorate small rural towns, help them meet the needs of local people and provide access to a wide range of retail, leisure, professional and public services and enables regional partnerships to target towns in their region according to selection criteria agreed regionally. A full assessment of this initiative is under way.

3. *Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure Programme*

The Department is to provide £10 million over the period 2003–04 to 2005–06 for capacity building in the voluntary sector in rural areas. During 2003–04 £86,000 has gone toward developing Voluntary and Community Sector consortia across the existing or former shire county areas. The remainder will be spent during 2004–05 and 2005–06 on the delivery of generalist and specialist support to the Sector frontline bodies in rural areas. The first strand will go towards priorities identified by these county consortia, the second will be to increase the uptake of financial entitlements among pensioners in some rural areas and the third will be go towards researching the potential for sustainable income generation through trading by rural voluntary and community organisations.

Horse Passports

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she plans to implement a system of horse passports; and if she will make a statement on her strategy for increasing public awareness of the need for such passports prior to their implementation. [177705]

Alun Michael: Legislation on requirements for horse passports came into effect on 30 November 2003. This has been updated by the Horse Passports (England) Regulations 2004, which came into force on 10 June.

We have worked alongside the horse industry and passport issuing organisations to publicise this requirement. Bearing in mind the diversity of the target audience, our strategy has been to concentrate on specialist and regional media for news and advertising activity, and providing information direct to a full range of horse establishments (including riding stables, retail and service outlets.)

Moorland Fires

Tom Levitt: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what financial and other support her Department *(a)* has given, *(b)* is giving and *(c)* plans to give to the use of helicopters in fighting moorland fires. [178099]

Alun Michael: No support is given to this activity, nor has support been given in the past but officials will review the position as part of a forthcoming review of policy concerning moorland management.

Orchards

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the acreage of *(a)* apple, *(b)* pear, *(c)* plum and *(d)* cherry orchards is in active production in England; and whether that has varied over the last 10 years. [177782]

Alun Michael: The following figures show the total estimated area of orchard fruit from 1994 to 2003 in England and Wales.

Crop area (hectares)

	Apples (dessert and culinary)	*Pears*	*Plums*	*Cherries*
1994	14,477	3,032	1,669	611
1995	12,797	2,941	1,588	604
1996	11,993	2,739	1,444	592
1997	12,783	2,665	1,672	645
1998	12,506	2,500	1,596	578
1999	12,013	2,360	1,367	591
2000	11,457	2,355	1,213	459
2001	9,970	2,330	1,072	473
2002	8,373	2,041	947	428
2003	7,796	1,742	1,003	381

Notes:

1. Data for 1994 and 1995 relates to England only.
2. Data for 1994 to 2000 inclusive excludes minor holdings.
3. The Orchard Fruit Survey is conducted on a sample basis with estimates made for non-responders and those holdings not surveyed.

Source:

Orchard Fruit Survey (England and Wales)

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much money was paid to English apple growers under the Countryside Stewardship scheme in each of the last 10 years. [177786]

Mr. Bradshaw: Annual payments to Countryside Stewardship agreement holders, for the restoration of traditional orchards in each of the last 10 years were as follows:

£000

	Amount
1994	99
1995	133
1996	146
1997	192
1998	220
1999	265
2000	294
2001	343
2002	387
2003	470

These orchards can be apple, pear, cherry, plum or damson, or cider and perry orchards, or cob nut platts.

Water Technologies

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many applications have been received for products to be included in the Enhanced Capital Allowance Scheme for Water Technologies; and how many have been refused. [175276]

Margaret Beckett: Since the launch of the scheme, 366 applications for inclusion of products have been received. Of these applications, 147 have been refused inclusion in the scheme, as the products failed to meet the relevant technical specifications.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost is to date of the Enhanced Capital Allowance Scheme for Water Technologies. [175277]

Margaret Beckett: When the Government announced the introduction of the scheme in 2003, it published estimated Exchequer costs of £20 million in 2003–04, £30 million in 2004–05 and £25 million in 2005–06.

Actual Exchequer costs will depend upon take-up of the qualifying technology products. It is too early to comment on the actual take-up.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many employees in her Department have *(a)* signed a formal opt out from and *(b)* are exempt from the Working Time Directive; and how many employees in her Department have recorded hours, including any accruing on a flexitime basis, in excess of the maximum allowed under the Working Time Directive in the last month for which figures are available. [178363]

Alun Michael: Currently 13 staff in DEFRA have signed voluntary agreements to disapply the 48 hour limit set by the Working Time Regulations. The Department has determined that none of its staff is exempt from their provisions. The Department does not have centralised records to show how many staff have worked in excess of the maximum in the last month. The Regulations require that the 48 hour limit is measured over a 17 week period but a flexibility to the Regulations introduced in 1999 removed the requirement for employers to keep records of the hours worked by staff who voluntarily agree to disapply the limit. DEFRA has stated its commitment to keep to an absolute minimum the numbers of staff who regularly work more than 48 hours per week and continually reviews this including staff who are working close to but may not actually exceed the limit.

Wyevale Garden Centre (Birds)

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for what reason her Department granted a licence to Wyevale Garden Centre near Thornbury to shoot robins; and if she will make a statement. [176392]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 makes provision for a system of licensing to allow certain persons to undertake actions against birds which would otherwise be illegal in terms of the Act.

Section 16(1)(i) gives powers to the Secretary of State to grant licences for the purpose of preserving public health or public or air safety, subject to there being no other satisfactory solution.

An application was received by the Department to kill a small number of robins that were persistently fouling a cafeteria located within a garden centre. The application was considered by one of the Department's wildlife management advisers and based on the adviser's recommendation the licensing unit granted a licence to allow up to four robins to be killed to preserve public health and safety. An investigation of this case, showing that the shooting of the birds by a pest control company was legal and proper procedures were followed, was published on the DEFRA website (www.defra.gov.uk) on 11 June.

TRANSPORT

Speed Cameras

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will place in the Library the responses received from safety camera partnership project managers in England and Wales to his Department's letter of 19 December 2003 about the safety camera programme. [155540]

Mr. Jamieson *[holding answer 23 February 2004]:* My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State has today made a Statement to hon. Members on the successful operation of the Safety Camera Programme, and have placed in the Libraries of the House, copies of the Partnerships' replies to my Department's letter of 19 December, regarding their work.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 19 May, *Official Report*, column 1002W, on speed cameras, at which locations in Humberside he has given permission for *(a)* fixed and *(b)* mobile camera sites to be placed; and what criteria he took into account before granting permission for these sites. [176050]

Mr. Jamieson: The approved sites are listed as follows. They were assessed against and meet the criteria for proposed new sites set out in the current 'Handbook of rules and guidance for the operation of the national road safety camera programme for England and Wales', a copy of which was placed in the Library in December, including the criteria for the number of collisions over the preceding three years (4 or more collisions involving people being killed or seriously injured (KSIs) or eight or more personal injury collisions (PICs) for fixed speed camera sites, and 2 KSIs or 4 PICs for mobile speed camera sites.

Fixed Cameras	*Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) collisions in the preceding three years*	*Personal Injury Collisions (PIC) in the preceding three years*
Clough Road	5	12
Spring Bank West	4	28
B1239 North of Preston	4	6
A1079BeverleyRoad	6	6

Mobile Cameras	*KSI casualties in the preceding three years*	*PIC collisions in the preceding three years*
Greenwood Avenue	4	13
A614 North of Shiptonthorpe Roundabout	3	6
Ashby Road, near Pittwood	3	22
Luneburg Way	2	7
Bricknell Avenue	2	4
Anlaby Road	2	20
Cromwell Road, Grimsby	2	6
Saltshouse Road	2	3
Queensway	2	22
A161 Belton	2	6
A 1077 Barton	2	5
A614, south of Shiptonthorpe	2	1
Pelham Road, Immingham	2	11

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process

16. **Mr. Hendrick:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his assessment is of the current state of Mr. Sharon's plan to move out of Gaza and the effect of that on the road map. [178640]

Mr. Rammell: I welcome the 6 June announcement of approval in principle by the Israeli Cabinet for the removal of settlements in Gaza and four from the West Bank. I hope that preparations for withdrawal will be carried out without delay and that implementation swiftly follows. Withdrawal of settlements would be in line with Israel's commitments under Phase One of the roadmap.

Libya

17. **John Robertson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on progress in UK relations with Libya. [178642]

Mr. Rammell: Libya's decisions to formally accept responsibility for the Lockerbie bombing, renounce terrorism and take action to dismantle its Weapons of Mass Destruction development programmes opened the way for my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, to meet Colonel Qadhafi on 25 March.

The Government are building on this contact to develop further our political, cultural and commercial ties, while continuing to seek progress on the difficulties that remain between us.

Saudi Arabia

18. **Mr. Chaytor:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent advice he has given to British nationals resident in Saudi Arabia. [178643]

Mr. Rammell: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office advises British nationals resident in Saudi Arabia that if they choose to remain in Saudi Arabia they should take all necessary steps to protect their safety and should make sure they have confidence in their individual security arrangements. They should maintain a high level of vigilance, particularly in public places frequented by foreigners. They should adopt a low profile and avoid public gatherings, which could lead to disorder. They should remember that Islamic law is strictly enforced in Saudi Arabia.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office travel advice makes clear that there is a continuing high threat of terrorism in Saudi Arabia. Following terrorist attacks in April and May 2004, we continue to believe that terrorists are planning further attacks against Westerners and places associated with Westerners.

The full test of our advice is available at: www.fco.gov.uk. We keep our travel advice under close review.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what account the Government takes of the changing *(a)* security and *(b)* political situation in Saudi Arabia when making decisions on arms export licences; and if he will make a statement. [178139]

Mr. Rammell: Export licence applications for Saudi Arabia, as for all countries, are assessed against the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Criteria, taking account of the circumstances at the time and other announced Government policies. In assessing export licence applications, the Government take account of all available and relevant information.

Cyprus

19. **Syd Rapson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the *(a)* Turkish and *(b)* Greek Governments about the future of Cyprus. [178644]

Mr. MacShane: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave earlier today to my hon. Friend the Member for Warrington, North. The Government, at the 26 April General Affairs and External Relations Council in Brussels and the 17 May UK-Turkey summit, and via our Ambassadors in Ankara and Athens, have been

in regular contact with the Turkish and Greek Governments following the 24 April referendums on the UN Secretary-General's Cyprus settlement plan.

Mr. Lyons: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make representations to the Turkish Government on protecting cultural sites in Turkish-occupied Cyprus. [178134]

Mr. MacShane: The Government attaches importance to the protection of cultural sites throughout Cyprus. We urge the authorities on both sides of the island to co-operate for the protection and preservation of Cyprus's cultural heritage for the benefit of all Cypriots.

Aung San Suu Kyi

20. **Dr. Naysmith:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the regime in Burma about human rights and the treatment of Aung San Suu Kyi. [178645]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave earlier today to my hon. Friend for Edinburgh, North and Leith (Mr. Lazarowicz).

EU Enlargement

21. **Miss McIntosh:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the enlargement of the European Union on 1 May. [178646]

Mr. MacShane: The enlargement of the EU on 1 May was a historic event. It will make a lasting contribution to peace, stability and prosperity across the continent.

St. Helena

22. **Mr. Steen:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make an official visit to St. Helena. [178647]

Mr. Rammell: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has no immediate plans to visit St. Helena.

European Constitution

23. **Mr. Redwood:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on negotiations on the European Constitution. [178648]

Mr. MacShane: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary took part in a further round of negotiations with European partners yesterday in Brussels. I understand that he intends to make a statement to the House tomorrow.

24. **Mr. Heathcoat-Amory:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will publish a list of the changes to the draft European Constitution demanded by the Government representative on the Convention on the Future of Europe. [178649]

Mr. MacShane: Throughout the 18 months of the Convention on the Future of Europe the British Government representative, the right hon. Mr. Hain, submitted many amendments, comments and suggestions to different versions of the draft Constitution as it developed. The written amendments can be found on the Convention website at: www.european-convention.eu.int

Afghanistan

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what arrangements have been made for international supervision and monitoring of the forthcoming elections in Afghanistan. [178039]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Joint Elections Management Body (JEMB), comprised of the Afghan Transitional Administration (ATA) and UN representatives, and chaired by Interior Minister Jalali, is responsible for election preparations. As part of its electoral support plans, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) intends to establish an 'Observation Office' to facilitate national and international election observation. The Office is intended to support information exchange between Afghan and international observers and other interested parties; provide briefing packages for observers; and develop training materials for Afghan observers.

We are currently discussing with EU partners and the European Commission a range of measures to support the elections, including deployment of monitors and advisers. There are also likely to be observer teams from a number of other countries. Work is also in hand to develop domestic monitoring capacity. Afghan civil society organisations involved in this have formed a 'Core Group' to coordinate domestic monitoring activities.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the extent of the reform of the Afghan National Army since 2002. [178054]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The creation of multi-ethnic and accountable armed forces, providing the elected Government with the institutional means to exercise their authority, is one of the key challenges for the Afghan Government and international community in post-conflict Afghanistan. Considerable progress has been made, and the Afghan National Army (ANA) is now about 10,000 strong. In recent months the training of officers and soldiers has been accelerated after the building of further capacity at the military training centre in Kabul and a total of 1,800 additional troops are now able to undergo training at any one time.

International support in this area is led by the United States. UK military forces stationed within the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) are providing training and mentoring for Afghan NCOs. In the next few months the ANA will start to establish permanent bases in cities outside Kabul, with the first to be established in Kandahar. This follows successful deployment of ANA battalions in March and April 2004 in response to unrest in the Herat and Faryab regions.

Biological Materials (US Exports)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what evidence he has collated on US exports of biological materials between February 1985 and November 1990. [177154]

Mr. MacShane: None, other than information published by the United States Administration.

China

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the actions of the Chinese Government in respect of the 15th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre. [178583]

Mr. Rammell: We are concerned by reports from Human Rights NGOs that at least 12 dissidents were put under house arrest or surveillance in the run up to this anniversary. Those under house arrest included the leader of the Tiananmen Mothers Group, Ding Zilin.

The UK raised the harassment of dissidents, including those linked to the events in Tiananmen Square, most recently at the May round of our human rights dialogue with China.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) when he will reply to the letter to him dated 26 April from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mr. Yakubu Kabiz; [177998]

(2) when he will reply to the letter to him dated 26 April from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to H S Khan. [178945]

Mr. Mullin: My right hon. Friend's letter refers to documentary evidence at appeal, which is collated by the Immigration Appellate Authority. The letter has been transferred to the Department of Constitutional Affairs as the Department responsible for the Immigration Appellate Authority. My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. Lammy) will reply to my right hon. Friend.

Cuba

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action he is taking to encourage the US Administration to remove its sanctions against Cuba. [178129]

Mr. Rammell: The UK prefers a policy of constructive engagement and dialogue with Cuba, and we make our objections known to US policy every year at the United Nations General Assembly. On 4 November 2003, we again voted to adopt the resolution on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the USA against Cuba.

Guantanamo Bay

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Pendle (Mr. Gordon Prentice) on 26 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1634W, on Guantanamo Bay, on how many occasions, and in respect of how many individuals concerns were raised with the US authorities; and on what dates. [179054]

Mr. Mullin: We are not in a position to provide the detailed information requested. This information is withheld under Exemption 12 of Part 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. The Data Protection Act also prevents us from disclosing personal data on individual cases under Exemption 15 of the Code.

We are very conscious of the importance of seeking to safeguard the welfare of all British nationals detained at Guantanamo Bay. Officials at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office are in touch with the families of the British detainees, who are advised of the welfare visits by British officials to Guantanamo Bay.

Iraq

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 30 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 581W, on Iraq, what the basis is of the Government's understanding that the originators of the intelligence that Iraq sought the supply of uranium from Africa discussed the issue with the International Atomic Energy Agency shortly before the International Atomic Energy Agency Report of 7 March 2003. [178086]

Mr. MacShane: As stated in the answer my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary gave to my hon. Friend, together with subsequent answers given to my hon. Friend on this issue, I am withholding further details of intelligence exchanges with allies under Exemption 1*(c)* of Part 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs to whom the Coalition Provisional Authority is accountable. [178397]

Mr. Rammell: The role of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) was recognised and further defined in resolution 1483 of 22 May 2003, and its authority is set out in CPA Regulation No 1, copies of which have been placed in the Library of the House. Resolution 1483 will continue to operate until 30 June, when the handover of authority to the Iraqi Interim Government will be complete and the CPA will dissolve. Security Council Resolution 1546 of 8 June sets out the transition arrangements for after 30 June.

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs to whom the Iraq Survey Group is accountable. [178398]

Mr. MacShane: The Iraq Survey Group forms part of the Joint Task Force Iraq, which reports through the chain of command to General Abizaid and upwards to the US Secretary of State for Defense. The US Director Central Intelligence has overall responsibility for the search for weapons of mass destruction. The British element of the Group has a national link to the Secretary of State for Defence through the Permanent Joint Headquarters at Northwood and the UK Ministry of Defence.

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he expects the Iraq Survey Group to complete its work; and what criteria will be applied when deciding whether the work of the Iraq Survey Group is complete. [178399]

Mr. MacShane: There is no set timetable for Iraq Survey Group activities. The Group will continue its work for as long as appropriate. It is not possible to say when the Iraq Survey Group will have completed its task.

Sudan

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he expects the Independent Expert mandated by the 23 April UN Commission on Human Rights decision on Sudan to be appointed. [177384]

Mr. Mullin: The UN Economic and Social Council has to endorse the decision of the Commission on Human Rights before an Independent Expert can be appointed. We have pressed for an early decision of the Council and consultations are under way. Once the decision is approved, the Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights will then be in a position to appoint an individual to the post.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Alcohol Licences

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many premises have a licence to serve alcohol all night, broken down by local authority. [178410]

Mr. Caborn: Alcohol licences are granted by licensing justices and, where available, statistics are broken down by petty sessions areas and not by local authority areas. Generally, no justices' licences permit the sale or consumption of alcohol all night. This is the effect of section 60 of the Licensing Act 1964 which details the permitted hours for the sale and supply of alcohol from licensed premises. There are however four exceptions. Firstly, all on-licensed premises are able to sell alcohol all night on each New Year's Eve unless the premises are subject to a restriction order. Secondly, the 1964 Act does not prohibit or restrict the sale or supply of alcohol to, or its consumption by, any person in any licensed premises where he is residing, or the supply for consumption by any private friends of such a person who are being entertained by that person at his own expense. Thirdly, the 1964 Act does not prohibit or restrict the supply of alcohol for consumption on the premises to persons employed there for the purposes of the business carried on by the holder of a justices' licence if the alcohol is supplied at the expense of their employer or the person carrying on or in charge of the business on the premises. Fourthly, under section 74 of the 1964 Act, justices of the peace on application from premises situated in the immediate neighbourhood of a public market or place where people follow a lawful trade or calling, may grant an order adding, either generally or for such days as may be specified in the order such hours as may be so specified, to the permitted hours in those premises. These are commonly called "general orders of exemption". There are no centrally held statistics on the numbers or dispersal of general orders of exemption. However, the number permitting the sale or supply of alcohol all night in connection with a public market (for example, Smithfields Meat Market in London) is believed to be very small.

WALES

A483

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what recent discussions he has held with National Assembly for Wales Secretaries concerning improvements to the A483. [177368]

Mr. Hain: Responsibility for the A483 Trunk Road rests, in Wales, with the National Assembly, and in England with the Highways Agency. Officials from these two bodies meet regularly to discuss improvements.

A public consultation was held last year, on a Route Management Strategy for the A5/A483 Trunk Roads. Further consultation is planned towards the end of this year, on the Pant—Llanymynech by-pass, and it is hoped to award the contract for this work at around the same time.

Administration Budget

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what progress has been made towards the 5 per cent. reduction in real terms in his Department's administration budget by 2008, announced by the Chancellor in the House on 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 331. [177423]

Mr. Hain: The real terms reduction of 5 per cent. or more will be a central feature of the public spending settlements for 2006–08 to be announced in detail later this year.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many people have left employment in his Department because of *(a)* anxiety, *(b)* stress, *(c)* depression and *(d)* other mental health reasons in each year since 1997. [175673]

Mr. Hain: Since the establishment of the Wales Office on 1 July 1999 there have been no departures by staff from the Wales Office because of anxiety, stress, depression or mental health reasons.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

India

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will cease his Department's funding of the state's deregulatory Centre for Good Governance in Andhra Pradesh, India. [178607]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The Centre for Good Governance (CGG) was set up in 2001 by the Government of Andhra Pradesh (AP) to assist it in developing and implementing its governance reform programme. The programme has many strands, and since its inception, the Centre for Good Governance has undertaken work on a wide range of issues. Highlights

include a thorough assessment of public expenditure management systems, and an action plan for their improvement. The Centre has also studied Citizens' Charters and how they can be effectively used to improve services. Other work includes analysing corruption-prone processes, and assisting the Government to develop a broad anti-corruption strategy. CGG is currently completing a study on local bodies, and how their effectiveness can be improved. In addition to assisting the AP Government, the Centre is working with the Government of India, particularly in the areas of civil service reform and e-governance.

Recognising the importance of governance to tackling poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals, DFID has committed up to £5.9 million for the Government of Andhra Pradesh's governance reform programme; this lasts until March 2005. The assistance is provided in a flexible way so that it can respond to the state Government's evolving agenda. Regular discussions are held on the work programme of the Centre to ensure that it is line with the Government's priorities.

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will end the arrangement which places the Implementation Secretariat of the Andhra Pradesh state's Public Enterprises Department under the control of the Adam Smith Institute. [178608]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The Implementation Secretariat is responsible for taking forward the Government of Andhra Pradesh's public enterprise reform programme. It has always been under the control of the state government, and is headed by an Andhra Pradesh government official. The Implementation Secretariat reviews the options for state enterprises, and recommends their closure, restructuring or sale; it then implements the state government's decision.

Adam Smith International (ASI) won a competitive tender to provide advisory and administrative support to the Government of Andhra Pradesh. In the first stage, as well as providing consultancy advice, ASI also engaged the local consulting firms and staff for the Implementation Secretariat. In 2003, the Implementation Secretariat itself took over these administrative responsibilities. DFID is discussing its programme, including assistance to public enterprise reform, with the new government, to ensure that it reflects their priorities and makes the most effective contribution to their efforts to tackle poverty.

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the viability of his Department's commitments entered into as a result of the Vision 2020 document produced by McKinsey & Co for Andhra Pradesh's Chief Minister Naidu. [178609]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Vision 2020, published in 1999, set out the vision of the Government of Andhra Pradesh for development in the state. It committed the government to a number of goals, including the eradication of poverty and universal primary education, and included many ideas and approaches about how these goals could be achieved. It was not however, a strategy or plan that could be funded. The projects which DFID is supporting in Andhra Pradesh were each based on requests for assistance, and were designed and agreed only after detailed appraisals and discussions with government. They are regularly reviewed to assess progress and agree any changes.

DFID has a wide-ranging programme in Andhra Pradesh. It includes both support to the government in implementing cross-cutting reforms and support for programmes providing basic services such as primary schooling and treatment of Tuberculosis. DFID also has two large programmes—AP Rural Livelihoods (APRLP) and AP Urban Services for the Poor (APUSP)—which aim to make government more responsive to the needs of poor people, and to encourage the involvement of poor communities in decisions which affect their lives. APRLP works in five of the poorest rural areas, and has a central focus on agriculture, on which most poor people depend. APUSP works in 32 towns, and as well as improving government's services, it finances new infrastructure in slum areas, for example to address drinking water and sanitation needs. Both projects include components to help poor families to make a better living by developing new opportunities to earn income, for example through skills training.

The new state government of Andhra Pradesh is setting out its priorities for development and poverty reduction. Discussions have started on how DFID can most effectively support government's efforts to tackle poverty, and this dialogue will include reviewing existing projects to see whether any changes are required.

Ministerial Travel

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the cost to public funds of travel expenses incurred by Ministers in his Department in *(a)* domestic journeys and *(b)* journeys abroad was in each year since 1997. [176659]

Hilary Benn: In respect of overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government has published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The Government have also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Libraries of the House. These reports give information reaching back to 1995–96. Information for 2003–04 will be published in due course.

For domestic travel the information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

All Ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

Palestinian Authority

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assistance his Department has provided to enable the Palestinian Authority to prepare for elections. [178594]

Hilary Benn: The Government welcomes the recent announcement by the Palestinian Authority (PA) to hold municipal elections between August 2004 and mid-2005. The European Commission has committed

€10 million to enable the PA to prepare for these and other elections. 17 per cent. of this expenditure is attributable to the UK. DFID has no plans to provide additional bilateral financial assistance for elections.

Rome Declaration on Humanitarian Aid

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what progress is being made on the Rome Declaration on Humanitarian Aid. [176793]

Hilary Benn: The UK is one of 23 members of the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD)'s Development Assistance Committee (DAC), which provides a means for donors to share experience and develop best practice in aid management. In February 2003, an OECD High Level Forum in Rome agreed a series of Good Practice Papers on the Harmonisation of Donor Practices for Effective Aid Delivery. With support from DFID and other agencies, the DAC has been developing means to measure progress in this work and a report will be published in December 2004.

The UK Harmonisation Action Plan was also agreed in February 2003, and over the last year DFID has been at the forefront of advocating harmonisation, both by testing out new approaches and by working collectively with others to change ways of working. This should significantly reduce the burden imposed on partner countries by the wide range of procedures that donors now apply to very similar tasks in delivering their assistance, for example during audit and evaluation.

As co-chair of the Strategic Partnership for Africa (SPA), DFID has also supported efforts to improve donor harmonisation. The 2003 survey indicated that alignment with national Poverty Reduction Strategies was still falling short. However, work is now being carried out jointly by SPA donors to identify how to make faster progress.

Rwanda

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what *(a)* action is being taken and *(b)* aid is planned to be offered by the United Kingdom Government to help Rwanda reach the targets set in the memorandum of understanding; and what aid is being offered from other western countries, with particular reference to the United States of America. [177665]

Hilary Benn: DFID's programme of support to Rwanda is set out in the Rwanda Country Assistance Plan. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) complements this, providing the political framework in which the Country Assistance Plan is set.

The United Kingdom Government is committed to helping Rwanda reach the targets set out in these documents. Officials from DFID work closely with colleagues in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and with other donor Governments, to ensure our approach is consistent and focused on helping the poor of Rwanda.

The UK/Rwanda MoU was first signed in 1999 and is renewed on an annual basis. It underpins the UK/Rwanda bilateral relationship, and provides a sound basis for constructive dialogue and assessment of progress on political developments.

The UK Government maintains a regular dialogue with the Government of Rwanda and has gained their trust and respect. The UK's strong relationship with the Government of Rwanda enables us to have open and frank discussions on a range of issues, including performance against targets set out in the Memorandum of Understanding.

The UK Government remains committed to reducing poverty in Rwanda and to the targets set out in the Government of Rwanda's Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS). The MoU sets out Rwanda's commitment to this and reaffirms the UK Government's long-term commitment to poverty reduction in Rwanda.

DFID has committed £42 million for poverty reduction in 2004–05 and £47 million in 2005–06. Two thirds of the money—equating approximately to all the salaries for all the teachers in Rwanda—is given direct to the Government of Rwanda in the form of Poverty Reduction Budget Support.

The United States of America, through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), has committed $46 million (£25 million) to Rwanda through both bilateral $36 million/£19.5 million) and non-bilateral programmes ($10 million/£5.5 million). Over half of the US programme ($29 million/£16 million) is committed to Health and HIV/AIDS programmes, $13.5 million (£7 million) to agriculture, food security and economic growth and $3.5 million (£2 million) to democracy and governance programmes.

Other bilateral donors active in Rwanda include Switzerland, Sweden, Holland, Germany, Belgium, France and Canada. Together they have committed an estimated £61.5 million to Rwanda in 2004. This makes the UK the largest bilateral donor in Rwanda. Multilateral donors, notably the European Union to which the UK provides an annual contribution, are also present in Rwanda. The EU has committed approximately £74.7 million to Rwanda in 2004.

To ensure that aid given to Rwanda is used in the most effective way, all bilateral and multilateral donors are working to harmonise their approaches and develop complementary programmes.

Sudan

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if his Department will *(a)* increase pledges to and *(b)* ensure more supplies are delivered and pre-positioned in Darfur, Sudan; and if he will make a statement. [178238]

Hilary Benn: During my visit to Darfur last week I announced a further allocation of £15 million for humanitarian response to the situation in Darfur. This takes the total DFID humanitarian response to the crisis to £34.5 million since September 2003. The UK is the

nd largest bilateral donor in Darfur. We are urging r donors to make significant contributions and will our own levels of funding under review.

FID is working closely with the UN and other rational agencies and donors to ensure that the very of assistance is increased as more areas become ssible and as operational capacity on the ground eases. This includes supporting the World Food gramme to pre-position foodstuffs in the areas likely e cut off during the rainy season.

refer the hon. Member for Banbury to the Statement ade in the House on 9 June 2004, *Official Report*, mn 275, on my return from Sudan.

ony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for rnational Development what representations Department has made *(a)* bilaterally to the vernment of Sudan and *(b)* through the rnational community, with particular reference to EU, to ensure resources are made immediately ilable for the rapid deployment of the ceasefire nitoring mechanism in Darfur; and if he will make a tement. [178239]

Hilary Benn: The UK has been heavily engaged in uring an effective deployment of the African Union U) Ceasefire Monitoring Mechanism.

have emphasised to the Government of Sudan on eral occasions the importance of swift agreement and full co-operation with the African Union onitoring Mechanism. In particular, during the visit the Sudanese Foreign Minister to London on 11 May, ring a telephone conversation with the Sudanese reign Minister on 20 May and during my visit to dan on 6–8 June. In addition, the Joint DFID/FCO dan Unit is in almost daily contact with the vernment of Sudan in London and Khartoum and ve been reiterating these messages.

Following agreement of the AU proposals on May, the UK committed £2 million to the mission d one observer. EU member states last week approved EC proposal to provide the AU mission with million euros (c. £8 million) from the Africa Peace cility, which is funded from the European velopment Fund. This will cover over half of the timated costs. DFID have urged other donors to pport the AU mission. The EU and member states are so contributing six observers to be integrated with ch of the six AU observer teams (including the server for the UK), a representative on the political-vel Joint Commission and the Deputy Chairman of the easefire Commission.

Effective deployment of the African Union lonitoring Mechanism will play a critical part in nproving the security situation in Darfur. I met with e first group of monitors in El Fasher on 7 June. refer the hon. Member for Banbury to the statement made to the House on 9 June 2004, *Official Report*, olumn 275 on my return from Sudan.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for nternational Development if his Department will aintain pressure on the Government of Sudan to permit only the voluntary return of displaced people and refugees in relation to Darfur; and if he will make a statement. [178269]

Hilary Benn: During my visit to Sudan I raised with the Government of Sudan, including the first vice-President, the urgent need for the Government of Sudan to rein in the Janjaweed and other militias, to condemn these acts of violence and to provide adequate protection for displaced people. The UK is fully involved in the situation in Darfur and will continue to press the Government of Sudan to take all steps to ensure the security of its citizens, including by ensuring that any return of internally displaced persons (IDP)s and refugees is voluntary and with adequate protection. I was told by the Sudanese Government that IDPs and refugees would not return unless there was adequate security.

I refer the hon. Member for Banbury to the Statement I made in the House on 9 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 275, on my return from Sudan.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Antisocial Behaviour Orders

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what guidelines are issued to magistrates on the consequences of a youth breaking an antisocial behaviour order. [178470]

Mr. Leslie: A sentencing guideline for a breach of an ASBO has been produced for use in the Adult court by the Magistrate's Court Sentencing Guidelines Working Party. However, due to the specific legislative and other considerations applicable when dealing with youths, these guidelines cannot be readily applied within the youth court.

The Criminal Justice Act 2003 provided for the creation of the recently formed Sentencing Guidelines Council, and it will fall to them to determine in due course, whether Youth court guidelines should be provided. The Judicial Studies Board (JSB) is planning to undertake a review of its Youth Court Bench Book during this financial year and will consider whether information and guidance on the breach of an ASBO could be included.

Statutory responsibility for the training of magistrates currently rests with the 42 independent Magistrates Courts' Committees (MCCs). The JSB has provided training materials to MCCs on ASBOs, which encourage through case studies, discussion of the issues arising in sentencing on the breach of orders, including those in the Youth court. In addition, in February 2004, the JSB advised MCCs that it expected every magistrate to receive a minimum of two hours face to face training on ASBOs by the end of this financial year.

In court lay magistrates sit with their justices' clerk or a legal adviser. The justices' clerk has a statutory duty to provide advice to the magistrates on questions of law, practice and procedure. This will include advice on applying any case law and relevant Court of Appeal judgments when making decisions on sentence.

Fixed-Term Parliaments

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether the Secretary of State has considered, as part of the Government's programme of constitutional reform, the introduction of fixed-term parliaments; and if he will make a statement. [178720]

Mr. Leslie: No.

Judges (Ethnic Minorities)

Tom Cox: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women from ethnic minorities sit as judges in the High Court. [178686]

Mr. Leslie: There are at present no High Court judges who declare themselves as from minority ethnic communities.

Opinion Polls

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what *(a)* regulations and *(b)* code of standards govern the opinion polling industry. [178184]

Mr. Timms: I have been asked to reply.

The Data Protection Act 1998 applies to market research and opinion polling. Professionally conducted market research and opinion polling should be carried out in accordance with the Code of Conduct and Guidelines of the Market Research Society.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps the Department is taking to ensure standards of accuracy and integrity in opinion polling. [178185]

Mr. Timms: I have been asked to reply.

These are matters for the industry's professional body, the Market Research Society, to address in the first instance.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans his Department has to undertake an investigation into the methods used by polling organisations to gather, use and present information. [178186]

Mr. Timms: I have been asked to reply.

The Department has no such plans.

DEFENCE

1958 Nuclear Tests

Mr. Tyler: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent representations he has received on the retrieval and assessment of the radiation from badges worn by participants in the Technical Services Forward Group during the nuclear tests in August and September 1958; and if he will make a statement. [178576]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 14 June 2004]:* The Ministry of Defence has received one representation on this issue in the last six months, which was a letter on 6 January 2004 from my hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy (Dr. Moonie) on behalf of one of his constituents.

Afghanistan

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on progress with the work of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan. [178146]

Mr. Ingram: Under the terms of the United Nations' Security Council Resolution 1510, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) continues to assist the Afghan Transitional Authority in maintaining security in Afghanistan, and the United Nations and other international civilian organizations engaged in humanitarian and reconstruction work. Work is in hand in NATO to expand the ISAF across Afghanistan.

Alvis plc

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what assurances General Dynamics has given regarding the continuance of *(a)* Alvis plc's UK-based and *(b)* Alvis Hagglund's development and production programmes and capabilities; [177780]

(2) what light and medium armour capabilities are produced by General Dynamics Corporation and its subsidiaries; what discussions have been held with General Dynamics concerning Alvis plc's Future Rapid Effects System activities; and if he will make a statement on the defence implications of the Office of Fair Trading's investigation into the proposed takeover of Alvis plc by General Dynamics Corporation. [177892]

Mr. Ingram: General Dynamics Corporation (GDC) and its subsidiaries produce a full suite of light and medium armour capabilities. Since the GDC offer to acquire Alvis plc was announced there have been several high-level discussions between the Ministry of Defence and GDC. These discussions covered both Alvis plc and the Future Rapid Effects System programme. On 3 June 2004 the Alvis plc Board recommended to its shareholders their acceptance of an offer from BAE Systems to acquire the company. GDC subsequently announced on 4 June 2004 that it would not revise its offer. The GDC offer for Alvis plc formally lapsed on 7 June 2004.

Army Medal Office

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make it his policy to delay the closure of the Army Medal Office until the end of the 2006–07 financial year. [178994]

Mr. Caplin: No. I am convinced that the investment of effort now to modernise medals delivery through the formation of a Joint Medal Office linked to the new Joint Personnel Administration system, will be to the ultimate benefit of veterans, and serving personnel.

Commonwealth War Graves

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Israeli

Government and *(b)* the Palestinian authority regarding the protection of Commonwealth war graves. [178584]

Mr. Caplin: Neither my right hon. Friends the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, nor the Secretary of State for Defence has had discussions on this subject with the Israeli Government. However, the Consul-General in Jerusalem has raised the vandalism of the Commonwealth War Graves at Gaza War Cemetery on Sunday 9 May with the Palestinian authority, which has undertaken to investigate.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission views the recent vandalism at Gaza War Cemetery as an isolated incident. Officials at local level within the Israeli Government and the Palestinian authority have given the Commission assurances that there is continuing respect for their cemeteries among the local population.

Defence Medical Services

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence in what circumstances service personnel who have had private medical treatment or diagnosis owing to delays in receiving such treatment and diagnosis from the Defence Medical Services will be refunded the cost of such treatment. [170006]

Mr. Caplin: The Defence Medical Services are responsible for the provision of clinical care to military personnel. Secondary care for military personnel is usually provided through routine treatment within the national health service unless there are operational reasons to do otherwise. In such cases, accelerated access to diagnosis and treatment can be provided at NHS hospitals that host the Ministry of Defence Hospital Units. An initial decision on the most appropriate care pathway is made at the time of referral, and is reviewed once the diagnosis is confirmed. Occasionally, use is made of private healthcare providers to enable Service personnel to be returned to operational fitness quickly if it is anticipated that treatment within the NHS would fail to meet an urgent operational requirement. However, no financial provision is made for reimbursing the cost of diagnosis and treatment if individuals choose to seek private medical care.

Explosion Mitigation Technology

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the use of explosion mitigation technology in the fuel tanks of armoured fighting vehicles used by British forces. [177214]

Mr. Ingram: In the main, the armoured vehicles used by the British forces rely on the protection afforded to the fuel tanks by the vehicle's armour and the positioning of tanks themselves within the vehicle. Some of the newer armoured vehicles currently in service, however, have additional measures incorporated in their design, with the intention of reducing the risk of fire and explosion in the fuel tanks.

In addition, since the acceptance and implementation of the current NATO Single Fuels Policy by the United Kingdom in 1991, all operational vehicles procured will run on diesel or kerosene type fuels which are inherently safer than gasoline. This in itself mitigates against the threat of fire, because of the reduction in the flammability of the fuel. For older vehicles, conversion programmes have been undertaken where this represents a cost-effective option for the remaining life of the fleet.

FRES Programme

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the strategic purpose is of the Future Rapid Effects System (FRES) programme; if he will make a statement on the range of technologies required for FRES; how many of the technologies needed for the FRES programme will be UK-sourced; what importance he places on FRES being a British developed and manufactured capability; and what role *(a)* Alvis Hagglund and *(b)* Alvis plc are expected to have in the FRES programme. [177781]

Mr. Ingram: The Future Rapid Effects System will provide a family of network-capable armoured vehicles as part of a coherent, effective and highly deployable medium-weight force, able to operate across the full spectrum of conflict, but with a significantly improved rapid intervention capability to prevent escalation of conflict and more protracted military commitment. However, the overall utility of FRES is much broader than just rapid intervention, as the vehicles will fulfil a wide range of combat and combat support roles.

There are a number of technologies that are under consideration, and early work will focus on maximising our understanding of their risks and maturity levels before we determine what is, and what is not, suitable for FRES.

FRES provides excellent opportunities for the United Kingdom industry to engage in the programme in line with the Defence Industrial Policy. However, until we have a better understanding of the FRES capability, and the potential solutions for providing it, the industrial arrangements must remain flexible in order to avoid prejudicing future options.

HMS Caroline

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress has been made in securing the retention of HMS Caroline in Belfast once decommissioned by the Royal Navy. [178548]

Mr. Caplin: After consideration by the Ministry of Defence, it has been decided to retain HMS Caroline for the foreseeable future as the RN Reserve Training Centre in Belfast. HMS Caroline will remain under the ownership of the Warship Support Agency who fund the maintenance of the ship.

Iraq

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the operation of the concessionary postal service for forces personnel in Iraq. [178432]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to my Written Statement of 27 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 70WS, and subsequent answers of 5 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1155W, to the hon.

Member for Portsmouth, South (Mr. Hancock), 1 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1605W, to the hon. Member for Mid-Norfolk (Mr. Simpson) and 5 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1527W, to the hon. Member for Uxbridge (Mr. Randall).

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many sites where it is known that cluster bombs were dropped by UK forces in Iraq have been cleared; how many sites await clearance; and if he will make a statement. [161586]

Mr. Ingram: To date, around 1.1 million individual items of unexploded ordnance have been cleared in the Multinational Division (South East) Area of Operations. This figure includes around 6,000 items of submunitions, though it is not possible to break down this figure into type of submunition or the county from which individual submunitions originated.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what arrangements are being made governing the responsibility for prisoners currently detained by the occupation forces in Iraq when powers of sovereignty are returned to Iraq on 1 July 2004. [167376]

Mr. Ingram: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence on 8 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 292–93W, to the right hon. and learned Member for North-East Fife (Sir Menzies Campbell).

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether British Service personnel have used stress postures as a technique of interrogation in Iraq. [174619]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 20 May 2004]:* The use of stress positions is not a permitted interrogation technique and is therefore not permitted in Iraq.

Overseas Dentists

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the oral statement of the Minister of State, Department of Health hon. Member for Doncaster, Central (Ms Winterton), of 11 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 22WH, how many overseas dentists he expects to start working in the armed services; and if he will make a statement. [178565]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence employs two types of dentist—those who are part of the Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force, and Civilians employed as Civilian Dental Practitioners (CDPs) or as locums, who work within the Defence Dental Agency (DDA).

In order to become a military dentist, individuals have to satisfy the nationality requirement to join the armed forces. This requires that applicants must be UK, Commonwealth or Irish Republic nationals. Therefore recruitment of Military dentists from outside of these areas does not take place.

The DDA does however recruit some civilian and locum dentists from the European Economic Area (EEA) and other countries, in addition to those from the UK, Commonwealth and the Irish Republic.

Prisons

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women held in British-run military and civilian prisons in Iraq have been charged with (i) criminal and (ii) military offences; and if he will make a statement. [177249]

Mr. Ingram: As of 10 June 2004 the United Kingdom were holding in Iraq 78 male internees no female internees and no detainees at the Divisional Temporary Detention Centre in Shiabah. Individuals are classified as internees if they pose or are judged likely to pose a threat to Coalition Forces. They are classified as detainees if they are suspected of a criminal act under Iraqi law. Detainees are immediately handed over to the Iraq Police Service.

Procurement

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how he takes account of the sustainability of the UK defence industrial base when making decisions on defence acquisitions for UK forces. [177389]

Mr. Ingram: The Government's Defence Industrial Policy, published in October 2002, seeks to provide the armed forces with the equipment which they require at best value for money for the taxpayer while sustaining a healthy and globally competitive defence industry. The factors that we take into account when making acquisition decisions are set out in Tables 1 and 2 of the Policy and, taken together, enable the best value for money solution to be identified. These factors include consideration of the impact on long-term value for money and on industrial capabilities which it is desirable to retain in the United Kingdom industrial base not only for defence reasons but also owing to the high value which they bring to the industrial economy. Copies of the Policy, together with detailed implementation guidance are freely available, and are included on the Ministry of Defence's website (www.mod.uk).

Sexual Offenders

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what measures he has taken to ensure that non-commissioned officers convicted of child pornography sex offences are debarred from further contact with young soldiers; and if he will make a statement on the particular circumstances of an NCO serving in the Royal Regiment of Wales; [175197]

(2) what steps were taken to inform civilian authorities in *(a)* Kosovo and *(b)* Germany following the conviction in 2002 of a Royal Regiment of Wales non-commissioned officer for offences involving child pornography. [175198]

Mr. Ingram: All personnel convicted of child pornography offences will have details of the charges, and punishment, recorded on their career file and conduct sheet. Subject to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, this will be taken into consideration during the selection process, in order to assess an individual's suitability for any particular post.

There is no record of a non-commissioned officer currently serving in, or attached to, the Royal Regiment of Wales being convicted, in 2002, of offences related to child pornography, though a junior NCO attached to RRW was convicted in 2004 as a result of an investigation started in 2002.

No provision exists within the Sexual Offences Act requiring the armed forces to inform other jurisdictions that a sex offender is intending to visit their country; this is a matter for the civil police.

Shipbuilding

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future of defence-related ship building in the United Kingdom. [178588]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence has embarked on the largest procurement programme of new ships for the Royal Navy in many years, including orders for six Type 45 destroyers, three ASTUTE Class submarines and four Landing Ships Dock (Auxiliary).

Future plans include the purchase of two new aircraft carriers, further orders of Type 45 destroyers and Astute Class submarines, and the progressive replacement of existing RFA vessels.

Looking further ahead, we expect to replace the capability provided by the Type 22 and 23 Frigates with the Future Surface Combatant.

It remains the policy of this Government that all warships for the Royal Navy, or vessels designated warlike, will be built in the United Kingdom, although weapon, command and propulsion systems, may be procured from overseas, following open competition.

All bidders for new procurements will, of course, have to demonstrate the capability and competitiveness to meet our needs, but this future programme should provide an excellent opportunity for the UK's shipbuilding industry.

Thales (Racal Acquisition)

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what undertakings were given to his Department by Thales when they acquired Racal. [177146]

Mr. Ingram: When Thomson CSF (now Thales) acquired Racal Electronics plc in July 2000, contractual undertakings addressing national security aspects were provided to the Ministry of Defence by Thomson CSF.

Statutory undertakings were also provided to the Department of Trade and Industry as part of the regulatory clearance for the acquisition. These are in the public domain and provide assurance that the company will comply with the contractual undertakings provided to the MOD.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Business Support

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many companies have benefited from the Small Businesses Loan Scheme in *(a)* Greater London and *(b)* each London borough in each of the last three years. [177130]

Nigel Griffiths: The Government do not operate a Small Business Loan Scheme.

Carbon Emissions

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of changes in carbon emissions which would result if all gas fired power stations which have been approved, but are yet to enter service, replaced existing carbon emitting generators. [178323]

Mr. Timms: The answer depends on the assumptions made about the type of existing carbon emitting generation which the new gas-fired capacity would replace and the load factor for the new gas-fired plant. There is currently around 4,800MW of gas-fired capacity, comprising six large stations, approved but yet to enter service.

If coal-fired plants are replaced then the carbon saving would amount to around 4 million tonnes per annum as coal emits more than twice the amount of carbon as gas per TWh of generation. If older gas-fired generation plants were replaced then the change in emissions would be around 0.3 million tonnes per annum, the change reflecting only the higher efficiency of new gas-fired generation compared with older gas generation technologies. A load factor of 70 per cent. is assumed for gas-fired generation.

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of how much carbon would be emitted if all gas fired power stations which have been approved, but are yet to enter service, entered service. [178324]

Mr. Timms: There is currently around 4,800MW of gas-fired capacity comprising six large stations, approved but yet to enter service. The level of associated carbon emissions will depend on the operational load factor associated with this capacity. On the assumption of a 70 per cent. load factor, emissions from these stations would amount to around 3 million tonnes of carbon per annum. The net impact on UK emissions will depend on what type of capacity (conventional fossil fuel or nuclear generation) this new capacity is replacing.

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the likely changes in carbon emissions if all renewable electricity generators which have been approved, but are yet to enter service, replaced carbon emitting generators. [R] [178325]

Mr. Timms: There is currently around 1700MW of renewable capacity approved but yet to enter service. This comprises 500MW of onshore wind and 1200MW of offshore wind as well as 20MW of hydro power. The change in carbon emissions associated with this level of new renewables capacity will depend on the assumption made about the type of carbon emitting generation which it replaces and the operational load factors associated with the renewables capacity.

If new renewables capacity replaces gas-fired generation, which would otherwise have been built, then the reduction in emissions would amount to around 0.5 million tonnes of carbon per annum. If the new capacity is assumed to have replaced coal-fired generation then the change in emissions would amount to around 1.2 million tonnes of carbon per annum.

These figures are based on the assumptions of a 30 per cent. load factor for onshore wind and 35 per cent. for offshore wind and hydro.

Combined Heat and Power

Jonathan Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what studies her Department has undertaken to assess the *(a)* economic impact and *(b)* carbon savings of requiring energy suppliers to have a statutory requirement to include combined heat and power as part of their overall production; and if she will make a statement. [177692]

Mr. Timms: In 2003, the DTI and DEFRA commissioned Cambridge Econometrics to undertake a study of the prospects for CHP to 2010. This work included an analysis of the effects of a CHP obligation along the lines of the existing Renewables Obligation. The results of this study were published in November of that year and can be found at: http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/environment/energy_efficiency/chpreport.pdf

DVDs/Videos

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to her answer of 24 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1442W, on DVDs/videos, if she will ask the Office of Fair Trading to investigate whether fair pricing competition exists between national supermarket chains and small independent retailers of DVDs and videos. [178670]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 14 June 2004]:* It is for the Office of Fair Trading (OFT), as the UK's independent competition authority, to decide whether to investigate competition issues. Any information or evidence concerning market failure or anti-competitive practices should be submitted directly to the OFT.

Management Earnings (Merseyside)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the average gross weekly pay for *(a)* managers and *(b)* senior officials in (i) Merseyside and (ii) the UK was in 2003; and if she will make a statement. [177918]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mrs. Claire Curtis-Thomas, dated 15 June 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking the average gross weekly wage for *(a)* Managers and *(b)* Senior Officials in (i) Merseyside and (ii) the UK for 2003. (177918)

Average earnings are estimated from the 2003 New Earnings Survey (NES) and are provided for full-time employees on adult rates of pay whose pay was unaffected by absence during the pay period, by their place of work. This is the standard definition used for NES tables. The NES does not collect data (on the self employed and people who do unpaid work. I attach a table showing the average gross weekly wage for Managers and Senior Officials in both Merseyside and the UK.

The NES, carried out in April of each year, is the most comprehensive source of earnings information in the UK. It is a one per cent. sample of all employees who are members of pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) schemes, but because of its sampling frame, it has difficulty capturing data on people with very low pay. It is therefore likely to under-represent relatively low paid staff earning below the tax threshold.

The New Earnings Survey publication criteria ensures that all estimates are undisclosive and of reliable quality. A number of estimates have been removed from the published tables for these reasons.

Average gross weekly pay for (a) Managers and (b) Senior Officials in (i) Merseyside and (ii) the UK for 2003

	Weekly earnings (£)
Managers	732.2
Senior Officials	1,739.9
Merseyside	
Managers	585.6
Senior Officials	[1]

[1] Data are not shown due to the small sample size.

Notes:

1. The occupation groups are defined using Standard Occupational Coding 2000.
Managers have been taken as SOC 2000 Major Group 1, Managers and Senior Officials.
Senior Officials have been taken as SOC 2000 Minor Group 111 Corporate Managers and Senior Officials. Here is a link to SOC 2000:
http://www.statistics.gov.uk/methods_quality/ns_sec/downloads/SOC2000_Vol1_V5.pdf
2. The New Earnings Survey release criteria currently require that any estimate:
(a) of a mean is based on a sample size of at least 30
and that the associated coefficient of variation does not exceed 5 per cent.
(b) of a quantile such as a percentile, quartile or median, or of a percentage, is based on a sample size of at least 10 and that the sample size is either at least 225 or that the relative coefficient of variation is less than 20 per cent.
3. Estimates are based on the workplace location.

Source for earnings data:
New Earnings survey, April 2003

Electricity Generation/Supply

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on what basis her Department includes *(a)* generators subject to transmission constraints and *(b)* inherently intermittent generators in aggregated totals of generation capacity when comparing levels of installed generation capacity against possible levels of electricity demand. [178351]

Mr. Timms: National Grid Transco (NGT) reports the level of installed generating capacity relative to forecast levels of electricity peak demand in its annual "Seven Year Statement" (SYS) and the associated quarterly Updates.

NGT do not currently differentiate the capacity of intermittent generators directly connected to the system from other forms of installed capacity. The registered capacity of any transmission-constrained generator is adjusted to the limit of the constraint in question.

Export Credits Guarantee Department

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to her answer of 13 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 696W, on the Export Credits Guarantee Department (ECGD), what information her Department can provide within reasonable cost that will not prejudice ECGD negotiations. [177722]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We are able to provide a breakdown of all of ECGD's unrecovered claims on a market-by-market basis (see following table). This information is updated regularly on ECGD's website at www.ecgd.gov.uk. These figures do not include our assessment of what claims are or are not recoverable. To disclose these figures would prejudice ECGD's attempts to recover claims outstanding.

Country	*Unrecovered claims (£)*
Algeria	129,541,473.30
Angola	52,540,571.75
Antigua and Barbuda	2,745,763.44
Argentina	31,517,224.98
Australia	7,144,450.70
Bahrain	69,465.62
Belgium	18,688,061.48
Benin	1.00
Bolivia	0.00
Bosnia and Herzegovina	895,641.37
Brazil	176,101,779.37
Bulgaria	0.61
Burkina Faso	0.00
Cameroon	24,387,259.69
Canada	17,085,467.64
Central African Republic	144,745.87
Chad	0.00
Colombia	1,024,981.33
Congo	58,027,462.04
Costa Rica	0.00
Cote D'Ivoire	21,029,634.18
Croatia	46,133,199.40
Cuba	52,146,568.31
Cyprus	454.00
Dominica	981,167.37
Ecuador	27,136,774.09
Egypt	134,034,814.42
El Salvador	0.00
Ethiopia	10,996,463.86
France	83,801.01
Gabon	74,718,999.71
Germany	0.00
Ghana	50,821,016.55
Greece	120,559.82
Grenada	957,608.78
Guinea	922,419.10
Guyana	0.01
India	1,742.06
Indonesia	772,775,807.24
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	28,766,647.48
Iraq	621,852,319.97
Israel	0.00
Italy	71,063.06
Jamaica	1,170,673.49
Jordan	216,315,339.29
Kazakhstan	5.97
Kenya	16,555,734.19
Korea, Democratic People's Republic	5,864,356.17
Kuwait	1,398,519.12
Lebanon	77.14
Liberia	7,875,586.13
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	8,972,335.50
Macedonia	2,382,683.45
Madagascar	9,930,882.07
Malawi	306,816.44
Mali	0.04
Mauritania	0.00
Mexico	1,291,657.72
Morocco	19,684,364.48
Mozambique	159,513.38
Myanmar	22,904,009.02
Nicaragua	367,532.50
Niger	3,370,318.92
Nigeria	1,650,458,746.72
Pakistan	6,517,406.84
Paraguay	5,939.89
Peru	56,027,018.47
Philippines	6,089,710.50
Poland	359,163,789.81
Portugal	1.00
Russian Federation	570,898,987.19
Saudi Arabia	1,305,765.53
Senegal	616,506.63
Serbia Republic	148,479,862.67
Seychelles	882,602.43
Sierra Leone	810,763.64
Singapore	5,326.27
Somalia	10,380,865.12
Spain	64,866.50
Sri Lanka	811.63
Sudan	89,460,418.44
Switzerland	23,412,038.16
Syrian Arab Republic	0.00
Taiwan	0.00
Tanzania, United Republic of	7,374.26
Togo	9,460,912.59
Turkey	1,632,772.29
Turkmenistan	0.00
Uganda	619.00
United States	3,207,078.66
Vietnam	5,528,838.01
Yemen	0.00
Yugoslavia	0.00
Zaire	24,652,248.37
Zambia	67,215,313.47
Zimbabwe	85,797,036.06

Flexible Working

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the merits of allowing employment tribunals to test the business case for the refusal of a request for flexible working; and if she will make a statement. [178115]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The flexible working law was designed by the Work and Parents Taskforce to be light-touch and is based on employer best practice. In translating the Taskforce proposals into legislation, the Government accepted their recommendation on handling unresolved requests. As the law currently operates, the facts on which the business case is based can be contested in an employment tribunal, as long as the appeal stage has been exhausted.

Since its introduction in April 2003, we have been constantly monitoring the impact of the law. We are committed to not making any changes to the laws for working parents until after their impact is reviewed in 2006. We continue to work with stakeholders and intermediaries, as well as engaging the views of both employers and parents directly to build up a strong evidence base for the review.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many requests for flexible working from *(a)* women and *(b)* men were for (i) shorter working hours and (ii) compressed working hours. [178116]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The DTI published results of the first flexible working employee survey in April 2004. The survey reported the types of flexible working requested by male and female employees since the introduction of the new employment rights in April 2003.

Table A4—Types of flexible working requested (percentage)

	Male employees	Female employees	All employees
Part-time	31	41	38
Flexitime	30	23	25
Reduced hours for a limited period	[1]—	12	13
Work from home on a regular basis	17	[1]—	10
Compressed working week	[1]—	[1]—	8

[1] Sample size too small for a reliable estimate. Percentage of those employees surveyed who had requested flexible working.

Notes:

1. Respondents could give multiple responses.
2. Respondents also stated other types of flexible working, but sample sizes were too small to report above.
3. All employees who requested flexible working since April 2003. Total of 456 employee responses.

Source:

ONS Omnibus Survey, September to November 2003 and February 2004.

In total an estimated 56,000 men and 294,000 women have requested shorter working hours, although the sample size was not large enough to include the number of men requesting reduced hours for a limited period, so this has not been included.

The sample sizes were too small to reliably estimate the number of women or men requesting compressed working hours.

Industrial Development Grants (Crosby)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much public funding from industrial development grants has been spent in Crosby. [177946]

Jacqui Smith: There have been two offers made to businesses in Crosby since 1997 worth £154,401.

Minerals

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will estimate the total gross value added to the economy from the mining and quarrying of minerals in each year between 1994 and 2004. [178661]

Jacqui Smith: The gross value added of mining and quarrying of minerals and of the whole economy from 1994 to 2002 (latest available) are:

	Gross value added at basic prices (£ billion)		
	Mining and quarrying of minerals	*Whole economy*	*Minerals share of whole economy (percentage)*
1994	1.2	608.7	0.2
1995	1.4	639.9	0.2
1996	1.6	680.2	0.2
1997	1.7	720.4	0.2
1998	1.6	762.4	0.2
1999	1.7	797.8	0.2
2000	1.8	839.2	0.2
2001	1.9	880.9	0.2
2002	2.3	925.6	0.2

Note:

Minerals comprise subsection CB of the Standard Industrial Classification—Mining and Quarrying Except Energy Producing Materials.

Sources:

1. Office for National Statistics.
2. UK National Accounts (the Blue Book), 2003 edition, table 2.3.

National Minimum Wage (Scotland)

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many people aged *(a)* between 18 and 21 and *(b)* over 21 years of age are receiving the national minimum wage in Scotland, broken down by parliamentary constituency or nearest available area. [176733]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not possible to provide estimates for individual parliamentary constituencies.

Based on the Office for National Statistics' Low Pay data released in 2003, the DTI estimates that between 100,000 and 120,000 people in Scotland were expected to have benefited from the October 2003 up-rating of the national minimum wage. However, it is not possible to provide estimates specifically for the development rate because of small sample size.

New Businesses

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new firms have been established in the UK during each of the last five years. [178665]

Nigel Griffiths: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Ynys Môn (Albert Owen) on 20 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1118W.

Nuclear Material/Power

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list the occasions since 1974 when nuclear material has been found to be unaccounted for, broken down by *(a)* the material and *(b)* the location where it had been held. [179055]

Mr. Timms: In accordance with international practice, the inventory difference that occurs when the result of a physical inventory of nuclear material is compared with the book inventory is referred to as MUF ('material unaccounted for'. The difference may be negative (an apparent loss) or positive (an apparent gain). MUF is a recognised feature of accounting for nuclear material and is caused primarily by the uncertainties inherent in the techniques used to measure nuclear material.

MUF figures at UKAEA, BNFL and Urenco sites are published annually by the industry. Figures published since 1973–74 will be placed in the Libraries of the House. There is no evidence to suggest that there have been any real losses or gains of nuclear material.

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how the employment rights and benefits of constables in the Atomic Energy Authority Constabulary will change under the provisions of the Energy Bill. [178317]

Mr. Timms: The Energy Bill requires that the Secretary of State make a nuclear transfer scheme providing for the transfer to the Civil Nuclear Police Authority those employees of the UKAEA who are members of the UKAEA Constabulary. The Bill also provides for members of the UKAEA Constabulary to hold office as members of the new Civil Nuclear Constabulary.

There will be no practical effect on the employment rights and benefits of members of the UKAEA Constabulary as a result of this transfer. The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 (TUPE) will apply, and current and future members of the Constabulary will continue to be eligible for membership of the UKAEA pension scheme.

The Bill prohibits members of the Constabulary from joining trade unions (subject to the same limited exceptions that apply to other police officers). This puts current informal arrangements on a statutory footing. It also brings the Constabulary into line with long established arrangements for other police forces. The restriction on trade union membership will not extend to civilian employees of the Police Authority.

The Bill also provides for statutory recognition of a Civil Nuclear Police Federation, and requires the Civil Nuclear Police Authority to align any provisions it makes about conditions of service of members of the new Constabulary with the provision made on such matters by police regulations (unless differences are justified due to the circumstances and structure of the Constabulary). Again this provides a statutory basis for current informal arrangements.

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the proposed decommissioning dates are of each nuclear power station in the UK; and what level of carbon emissions would result if each was replaced by combined cycle gas turbine generation. [R]178321]

Mr. Timms: The proposed closure dates of each nuclear power station in the UK are as follows:

Name of power plant	*Current proposed closure date*
Chapelcross	2005
Dungeness A	2006
Sizewell A	2006
Oldbury	2008
Dungeness B	2008
Wylfa	2010
Hinkley Point B	2011
Hunterston B	2011
Hartlepool	2014
Heysham 1	2014
Heysham 2	2023
Torness	2023
Sizewell B	2035

Output from nuclear generation in 2003 amounted to 82TWh. If this output was replaced by combined cycle gas turbine generation then the increase in carbon emissions would be around eight million tonnes of carbon per annum.

Nursing Homes

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the decision by the Office of Fair Trading not to include the impact of local authorities' purchasing power on the financial viability of nursing homes in its investigation into nursing homes. [178141]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 14 June 2004]:* The Office of Fair Trading is an independent body, and Ministers have no role to play in relation to its decisions about the conduct of market studies.

Parental Leave

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what proportion of eligible *(a)* men, *(b)* women and *(c)* parents have taken parental leave in each year since its introduction. [175407]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* Take-up of parental leave is not recorded by the DTI. However, a DWP report ("Maternity and Paternity Rights in Britain 2002: Survey of Parents") suggests that around 8 per cent. of eligible female employees whose employers provided parental leave used the provision. The same report also states around 10 per cent. of eligible male employees whose employers provided parental leave used the provision.

Petrol Prices

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what *(a)* evidence she has collated and *(b)* representations she has received regarding cartels in petrol prices, with particular reference to West Wales. [177601]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 8 June 2004]:* I have received no such evidence or representations. Under the Competition Act 1998 the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) is responsible for anti-cartel enforcement. Where the OFT has reasonable grounds to suspect a cartel in a particular sector of the economy, it will investigate the matter. Evidence of anti-competitive behaviour should therefore be passed to the OFT. The OFT's powers of investigation were strengthened by the Enterprise Act 2002, which also introduced a criminal penalty for cartel activity.

Regional Development Agency Funding

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which organisations have received funds from each of the regional development agencies, for each year since 1999; and how much funding was received in each case. [178858]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 14 June 2004]:* The RDA's fund an enormous number of organisations including businesses, local authorities, voluntary groups and partnerships. Such information could be obtained and made available only at a disproportionate cost.

Further information on RDA expenditure is available from their annual reports and accounts.

Rochdale Constituency

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents of the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale have benefited from a reduction of the working week to 48 hours; and what percentage of those are *(a)* women and *(b)* of Asian origin. [178516]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations provide workers with the right to refuse to work more than 48 hours on average, if they do not want to. Numbers for Rochdale are not available, however it has been estimated that around 300,000 workers resident in the North West stood to benefit from the introduction of the weekly working time limits in 1998.

(a) Around 30,000 (10 per cent.) of the workers in the North West who stood to benefit from the introduction of the weekly working time limits in 1998 were female.

(b) The number of workers in the North West who stood to benefit from the introduction of the weekly working time limits in 1998 of Asian origin was too small to provide a reliable estimate.

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the benefits to the residents of the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale of the new rights for night-shift workers. [178517]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations came into force on 1 October 1998. The regulations limit working time to 48 hours per week averaged over a 17-week reference period. For night workers the limit is eight hours per day on average, including overtime where it is part of a night worker's normal hours of work. There is no opt-out from the night working time limit.

Night workers are entitled to 11 hours rest between working days, one day's rest per week, and a 20-minute in work rest break if the working period is longer than six hours.

All night workers should be offered a free health assessment before they start working nights and thereafter at regular intervals for as long as they are working nights. The health assessments should take account of the nature of the work and the restrictions on a worker's working time under the regulations. Workers who suffer from problems as a result of working at night, should as far as practicable be offered alternative day work.

All workers are entitled to four weeks paid annual leave. There is no specific data available for night shift workers in Rochdale.

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government have taken to help small businesses in the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale since 1997. [178562]

Nigel Griffiths: The Business Link Operator for North Manchester has provided assistance to 1,795 enterprises in the constituency of Rochdale since 2001. The Small Business Service was set up as an agency of the Department of Trade and Industry in April 2000. Contracts were exchanged with a national network of 45 Business Link Operators (seven in the North West) to provide Business Support to small and medium sized enterprises from April 2001. Before this date Government Support to businesses was provided through Training and Enterprise Councils and the Small Business Service does not have access to this data.

The type of assistance provided to the 1,795 companies include Business Finance, Environmental, E-services, High Growth, International trade, Innovation and Technology, Micro Support, Workforce Development and other Account Management assistance.

Under the Enterprise Grant scheme (EGS), which has now come to a close (April 2004), 27 companies have received offers of grant with a total value of £994,500 since 1997.

Under the Research and Development grant scheme (R&D), six companies have received offers of grant with a total value of £325,776.

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new businesses have started up in the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale since 1997; and what percentage are run by *(a)* women and *(b)* people of Asian origin. [178563]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 115,000 business start ups in England and Wales, including 400 in Rochdale local authority (for which Rochdale is a constituency), in the last quarter of 2003. Data for local authorities are not available for before 2003.

The latest yearly figures show 465,000 business start ups in England and Wales in 2003. This represents a 19 per cent. increase on the year before.

DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for Rochdale local authority (for which Rochdale is a constituency) are shown as follows for the period 1997 to 2002. Data for 2003 will be available in autumn 2004.

VAT registrations per year—Rochdale

	Number
1997	480
1998	455
1999	440
2000	430
2001	455
2002	465

Source:

Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2002, Small Business Service, available from www.sbs.gov.uk/analytical/statistics/vatstats.php. The figures are also in the Library of the House.

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

The numbers of businesses starting in Rochdale that are run by women, or people of Asian origin, are not available.

The Small Business Service Omnibus Survey from autumn 2002 estimates that the proportion of businesses in England with one to 249 employees, with a majority of women in control of the business, is 13 per cent.; and the proportion of businesses in England with one to 249 employees, with a majority of people of Asian origin (Bangladeshi, Indian or Pakistani) in control of the business, is 3 per cent.

Utility Bills (Direct Debit)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what protection is available for people against utility company levies that are added to their bills because they choose not to pay by direct debit. [178668]

Mr. Timms: The protection available to utility customers varies according to the industry concerned, each of which is subject to specific regulation. In respect of gas, electricity and telephone, levies are not applied to customers who choose to pay by standard credit, although direct debit customers ordinarily receive a discount because of the lower costs of administering their accounts. Gas and electricity prepayment meter customers will ordinarily pay a higher tariff than other customers because of the costs of the meters and the infrastructure that supports them, but some suppliers do not maintain differentials between their standard credit and prepayment tariffs. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is responsible for matters concerning the water industry.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the practice of utility companies in imposing different levels of charges upon customers who pay for their services by direct debit and those who do not. [177659]

Mr. Timms: Direct debit is the most cost-efficient payment method for companies because, among other things, it guarantees payment and reduces invoicing costs. Utility companies therefore customarily offer a discount on their standard tariff for those paying by direct debit.

TREASURY

Carers

Helen Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many carers of working age are *(a)* in full-time employment, *(b)* employed part-time and *(c)* not in paid work. [178198]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Helen Jones, dated 15 June 2004:

As National Statistician and Registrar General for England and Wales I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many carers of working age are a) in full-time employment, b) employed part-time and c) not in paid work. (178198)

Information on economic activity of people in households providing unpaid care is available in table S026 in the *2001 Census National Report for England and Wales*. This volume is available in the House of Commons Library and also on the National Statistics website through http://www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/cn_87.asp. Figures derived from this table are shown in Table 1 below.

Census information on economic activity was coded for all people aged 16–74, rather than the usual 'working age' definition covering all males aged 16–64 and all females aged 16–59. Table S026 follows the convention of presenting results for this wider population.

Table 1: Economic activity and provision of unpaid care
All people aged 16–74 in households, 2001
England and Wales

	All people	*Providers of unpaid care*
All people	37,049,262	4,776,934
Full-time employment[1]	17,535,321	1,852,762
Part-time employment[1]	5,143,701	847,002
Not in paid employment[1]	13,462,160	2,029,437
Economically active full-time students	908,080	47,733

[1] Excluding economically active full-time students.

Source: S026, Census 2001 National report for England and Wales

Helen Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the cost to the Exchequer that would result if the unpaid care provided for older or disabled people by their relatives had to be paid for from public funds; and if he will make a statement. [178118]

Dawn Primarolo: The Government have made no estimate of the cost to the Exchequer that would result if the unpaid care provided for older or disabled people by their relatives had to be paid from public funds. The Royal Commission on Long Term Care included an assessment of the contribution made by carers. In response to the Commission's recommendations to increasingly offer flexible support services for carers, the Government introduced a specific carers grant that will provide over £600 million for carers by 2006.

Unemployment (London)

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people in London were unemployed in each year since 1997 according to the *(a)* claimant count and *(b)* survey definition; and what proportion this was of total unemployment in the UK on each definition. [177901]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. David Willetts, dated 15 June 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about measures of unemployment. (177901)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions.

Table 1 overleaf gives estimates of the number of unemployed people in London as measured by the LFS and expresses them as a percentage of the United Kingdom totals for the 12 month periods ending February in 1997, and each year from 2000 to 2003. Comparable information is not available for 1998 and 1999. As with any statistical sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to sampling variability.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (ISA). Table 2 overleaf gives the annual average numbers of JSA claimants for the London region, also expressing them as a percentage of the United Kingdom totals, for each year from 1997 to 2003.

Table 1: Estimated number of unemployment people
London, 12 months ending February in 1997, 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003

	Estimate	*As percentage of UK total*
1997	380,000	17.2
2000	258,000	15.3
2001	245,000	16.1
2002	240,000	16.5
2003	254,000	17.0

Source:
ONS Labour Force Survey

Table 2: Number of claimants of Jobseeker's Allowance (annual averages)
London, 1997–2003

	Number	*As percentage of UK total*
1997	269,717	17.0
1998	225,367	16.7
1999	203,133	16.3
2000	174,458	16.0
2001	154,917	16.0
2002	166,000	17.5
2003	170,692	18.3

Source:
Jobcentre Plus Administrative system

Job Creation (Stoke-on-Trent North)

Ms Walley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many new jobs have been created in Stoke-on-Trent, North in each year since 1997. [177632]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Ms Joan Walley, dated 15 June 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about jobs created in Stoke-on-Trent.

While statistics of new jobs created are not available explicitly, statistics from surveys enable comparisons to be made of net changes, in numbers of jobs, from year to year.

The following table, from the Annual Business Inquiry (a survey of businesses), shows the information requested, relating to jobs located in Stoke-on-Trent North, for each year from 1997 to 2002, the latest year available. The fall in the overall number of jobs almost all occurred in the manufacturing sector, and over the period 1997 to 2002 as a whole, there were increases in jobs in Stoke-on-Trent North in the sectors relating to: distribution, hotels and restaurants, transport and communication, and public administration, education and health.

The Labour Force Survey (a survey of households) shows a that the number of people of working age resident in the Stoke-on-Trent North Constituency who were in employment fell from 32,800 to 31,100 between the two 12 month periods ending respectively in February 1997 and February 2003, the latest period for which such information is available. However, the working age employment rate rose from 65.2% to 67.1%.

Total number of employees[1] with workplace in Stoke-on-Trent North Parliamentary Constituency: 1997 and 2002

	Total	
	Number of employees	*Change on previous year[2]*
1997	27,800	—
1998	29,400	1,600
1999	25,200	-4,200
2000	24,500	-700
2001	23,900	-700
2002	22,800	-1,000

[1] Employee jobs only, not self-employed jobs
[2] The change figures have been rounded to the nearest hundred separately from rounded levels for individual years
Source:
1997; Annual Employment Survey, rescaled 2002; Annual Business Inquiry (ABI)

Rochdale Constituency

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many job vacancies there were in the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003. [178543]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mrs. Fitzsimons, dated 15 June 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about job vacancies in Rochdale. I am replying in his absence (178543)

According to Jobcentre Plus administrative records, the number of unfilled vacancies in the Rochdale travel-to-work area was 800 on average during 1997. This represents only a proportion of all the vacancies available, as not all vacancies are notified to Jobcentres.

Figures are not available for Rochdale alone because the vacancies are allocated to local Jobcentres, not according to constituency boundaries, and because of the practice of notifying some vacancies centrally with one Jobcentre taking vacancies for others in the same district.

Jobcentre vacancy statistics were withdrawn from National Statistics in September 2001 as a result of distortions to the data, which occurred following the introduction of new administrative procedures by Jobcentre Plus. Comparable figures for vacancies in 2003 are therefore unavailable.

Results from the ONS Vacancy Survey were released as National Statistics from July 2003, but are not available for local areas.

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families in the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale have received child tax credit; and what percentage were of Asian origin. [178546]

Dawn Primarolo: For the total number of such families, I refer my hon. Friend to my answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Burton (Mrs. Dean) on 15 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 98W. Details of the ethnic groups of tax credits claimants are not currently available.

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many businesses in the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale have benefited from the 100 per cent. tax exemption for the purchase of computer and internet equipment; and what percentage of those businesses was owned or run by *(a)* people of Asian origin and *(b)* women. [178547]

Dawn Primarolo: We regret that the information is not available to estimate the number of businesses in a given constituency which have benefited from the 100 per cent. first year capital allowances for the purchase of information and communication equipment. Neither is any breakdown available from tax records on business ownership by ethnic group or gender.

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the annual total public sector expenditure in Rochdale was in *(a)* 1997–98 and *(b)* 2003–04. [178552]

Ruth Kelly: HM Treasury annually publishes analyses of public expenditure outturn data by country and region as National Statistics, in chapter 8 of the command paper 'Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses'. The latest edition was published in April 2004 as Cm 6201—'Public Expenditure Statistical analyses 2004'.

The ONS have also published a one-off set of experimental statistics of sub regional government accounts for 1998. The link to the article is: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_other/Regional_Government_Accounts.pdf

However no such information is available for Rochdale in either of these sources, as it is neither published nor collected to this degree of detail.

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the *(a)* change and *(b)* percentage change was in full-time permanent jobs in the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale from 1997 to 31 December 2003; [178554]

(2) how many new jobs have been created in the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale since 1997; [178556]

(3) how many people were employed in manufacturing-related jobs in the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale *(a)* on the latest date for which figures are available and *(b)* in 1997. [178557]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mrs. Lorna Fitzsimons, dated 15 June 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions about jobs created in Rochdale. (178554, 178556 and 178557)

While statistics of new jobs created are not available explicitly, statistics from surveys enable comparisons to be made of net changes, in numbers of jobs, from year to year.

The attached table shows the information requested, relating to jobs in Rochdale, for 1997 and the latest year available, 2002.

Number of full-time employees and total number of employees[1] with workplace in Rochdale parliamentary constituency: 1997 and 2002

		Number, per cent	
	Manufacturing	*Full-Time*	*Total*
Number of employees			
1997	8,700	24,700	36,000
2002	7,200	27,500	39,400
Change from 1997 to 2002[2]			
Absolute	—	2,900	3,400
Percentage	—	10.4	8.7

[1] Employee jobs only, not self-employed jobs.

[2] The 1997 to 2002 change has been rounded to the nearest hundred separately from rounded levels for 1997 and 2002.

Source:

1997; Annual Employment Survey, rescaled 2002; Annual Business Inquiry (ABI).

Advisers/Consultants

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much his Department and its agencies and non-departmental public bodies spent on external consultants and advisers in each of the last three years. [172437]

Ruth Kelly: The Inland Revenue, HM Customs and Excise, Office for National Statistics, Office of Government Commerce, National Savings and Investment, Royal Mint, Valuation Office, Debt Management Office and Government Actuary's Department's spend on external consultants in the last three years is as follows (using the OGC's definition of consultancy):

	£ million
2001–02	[1]73
2002–03	78

[1] 2001–02 excludes data for Inland Revenue. The data has been archived and would only be available at disproportionate cost.

Reliable data for 2003–04 is not yet available. Figures relate to resource expenditure.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will reply to the letter to him dated 27 April from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mr. Patrick McKenna. [178951]

Dawn Primarolo: I replied to the right hon. Member on 9 June.

Departmental Savings

Denzil Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total saving to his three departments has been in each of the years to April *(a)* 2002, *(b)* 2003 and *(c)* 2004 arising from the STEPS agreement. [178604]

Dawn Primarolo: Over the 20-year life of the STEPS contract, when compared with the Public Sector Comparator, the Departments expect to save £344 million (in net present values), with an estimated first year saving of some £27 million. In addition further benefits and savings will accrue over the life of the contract, for example through the transfer of risk and payment by the departments of a reduced facilities price as an offset against the deferred capital payment at the outset of the contract. Because all of these savings and benefits are taken over the 20 year life of the contract it is not possible to quantify annual savings.

Departmental Surveys

Norman Lamb: To a[sk] Chancellor of the Exchequer what surveys of [public] perceptions of *(a)* his Department and of its areas of responsibility, *(b)* Customs and Excise and *(c)* the Inland Revenue have taken place over the last 12 months; what the *(a)* title and *(b)* nature of these surveys was; what the findings of each survey were; where these findings have been published; what the cost of such surveys was; and if he will make a statement and place copies of the surveys in the Library. [176944]

Ruth Kelly: The information is as follows:

HM Treasury

No surveys of public perception of HM Treasury have been conducted during the past 12 months.

HM Customs and Excise

HM Customs and Excise commissioned a programme of 'Business Needs' surveys at the end of 2003. The cost of these surveys was £79,959 (including VAT).

An overall measure of customer satisfaction, obtained by combining results from the separate surveys, is used to monitor performance against the customer satisfaction element of the Department's current Public Service Agreement (PSA) Target 4.

Reports on these surveys will, following completion, be published on the Customs and Excise website and hard copies will be placed in the Library of the House.

No other surveys of this type were conducted during the past 12 months.

Inland Revenue

The Customer Service Performance Indicator (CSPI) is used as a performance indicator score for the Revenue's Public Service Agreement (PSA) Target 5. Information about the nature of the CSPI survey and the overall score produced by the 2003 survey have been published in the Inland Revenue's Spring Departmental Report (May 2004 (Cm 6225) Page 23). A research summary of the findings for the customer groups covered is under preparation and will be included in the Inland Revenue's publication schedule copies of which will be placed in the House of Commons Library. The cost of the 2003–4 CSPI survey was £292,810 (including VAT).

The Brand Tracking study tracks customer perception of the Inland Revenue over time.

A research report summarising the findings for future waves of Brand Tracking will be produced and will be included in the Inland Revenue's publication schedule copies of which will be placed in the House of Commons Library. The total cost of the two waves of Brand Tracking Research was £115,020.80 (including VAT).

EU Savings Directive

Denzil Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the revenue change to the Treasury arising from the implementation of the EU Savings Directive. [178130]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer my hon. Friend to the Regulatory Impact Assessment, published on 16 December 2003, which considers the costs and benefits of implementation of the EU Savings Directive. Copies of the Regulatory Impact Assessment were placed in the Library of the House. It is also available on the Inland Revenue website http://www.ir.gov.uk/ria/eusd- ria.pdf.

Financial Regulation

Harry Cohen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his Department maintains a record of the annual percentage which financial institutions add to their with profits endowments, mortgage annuities and pension financial vehicles for their investors; whether any financial regulatory body keeps such a record; if he will require such a record to be made available in the public domain; what steps he is taking to *(a)* encourage competition between such financial institutions and the financial vehicles they promote and *(b)* enable investors to make an informed choice; and if he will make a statement. [178400]

Ruth Kelly: With-profits bonus decisions are publicly available through a variety of sources including statements to policyholders, annual reports and accounts, regulatory returns made to the Financial Services Authority and reports in both the general and the specialist financial press. There are no plans to compile and make available a comprehensive record. These are medium and long-term policies for which one year's annual bonus percentage provides only part of the information relevant to understanding the policy.

The Financial Services Authority tells me that it regards improving transparency for existing and potential policyholders and treating customers fairly as the cornerstones of the changes that are being introduced for with-profits. Enabling consumers and those who advise consumers on their choice of investment to make rational choices on the basis of clearer and more transparent information will encourage healthy competition within the industry.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to improve investment competition by reducing penalties upon investors who wish to opt out of very low paying annual percentage additions to with profits endowments, mortgage annuities and pension financial vehicles; if he will instruct the Financial Services Authority to bring forward proposals to ensure that investors are not effectively locked in to uncompetitive financial vehicles; and if he will make a statement. [178401]

Ruth Kelly: The value of with-profits funds depends on the interaction between annual bonuses over the lifetime of the policy and the level of terminal bonus. Surrender values sometimes incorporate market value reductions where the nominal value of a policyholders funds is in excess of the value of the underlying assets and the terms of the insurance contract allow one to be imposed. It is important that the amounts paid to departing policyholders are fair both to those who leave the fund and to those who wish to remain invested for the longer term.

The Financial Services Authority has already made a number of proposals relating to closed with-profits funds including better provision of information to policyholders explaining the circumstances of closure, setting out the options available to policyholders and better planning for the run-off of the fund.

Imported Electricity

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer for what reasons electricity imported into the United Kingdom via interconnectors is not subject to the Climate Change Levy. [178352]

John Healey: Climate change levy is a single-stage tax which becomes due when a utility supplies a consumer with electricity, whether produced in the UK or imported via an interconnector.

International Development

Tom Brake: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his answer of 27 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1725W, on international development, if he will define what constitutes the usual representations. [178244]

John Healey: The Government have received many representations from Members, private individuals and other bodies such as NGOs on the subject of the 0.7 per cent. target for official development assistance. These include letters, e-mails and postcards.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) pursuant to the answer of 27 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1728W, on tax credits, where the reference to *(a)* child tax credit and *(b)* working tax credit appears in the document sent to all honourable Members; [178844]

(2) pursuant to the answer of 27 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1728W, on tax credits, whether *(a)* child tax credit and *(b)* working tax credit are subject to the right to reside test. [178845]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to page 3 of the briefing sent to all Members of Parliament on 10 May 2004 by my hon. Friend, the Minister for Citizenship and Immigration (Mr. Browne).

Professional Football Clubs

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many professional football clubs have gone into receivership or administration since 1997; and what the average percentage is of the money they owed to the Government that *(a)* the Inland Revenue and *(b)* Customs and Excise has agreed the clubs should repay. [178177]

Dawn Primarolo: Individual businesses are monitored by both revenue departments when they fall into arrears. However, information on the debts of particular groups according to the nature of their business is not held centrally in both departments. The information requested is therefore not readily available.

STEPS Agreement

Denzil Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much in total has been paid to external commercial, legal and financial advisers in respect of the STEPS agreement. [178102]

Dawn Primarolo: The STEPS agreement can be split into two distinct activities—the STEPS Project prior to contract go live in April 2001 and STEPS Contract Management since then. The costs given as follows for external commercial, legal and financial advice in respect of the STEPS agreement reflect this:

	£
STEPS	*Cost*
Project	8,545,992
Contract 1 April to 4 April	4,838,910

Denzil Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much was paid by the Department to Mapeley STEPS Contractor Limited in each year to April *(a)* 2002, *(b)* 2003 and *(c)* 2004. [178131]

Dawn Primarolo: Payments to Mapeley STEPS Contractor Limited for the Chancellors Departments are:

To April	£
2002	301,945,016.19
2003	309,546,889.08
2004	309,264,264.67

Taxation (Married People)

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his estimate is of the cost to the Exchequer of allowing married people to transfer their unused income tax allowance to a spouse with a taxable income in respect of families where the child is *(a)* under one year old, *(b)* one, *(c)* two, *(d)* three, *(e)* four and *(f)* five years old. [178857]

Dawn Primarolo: The cost to the exchequer through lower income tax of allowing married persons with children to transfer their full personal allowance to their spouse if he or she has a higher gross income for the options are listed as follows.

Cost in 2004–05 per annum

Option	*Amount (£ million)*
(a) married and with at least one child aged less than one year	320
(b) married and with at least one child aged one year	340
(c) married and with at least one child aged two years	360
(d) married and with at least one child aged three years	350
(e) married and with at least one child aged four years	370
(f) married and with at least one child aged five years	340

Notes:

1. Figures rounded to the nearest £10 million. They exclude any estimate of behavioural response to the tax change.
2. Age of child at last birthday.

The change in revenue for other taxes can be provided only at a disproportionate cost.

Trade (Endangered Species)

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many articles were seized by HM Customs under the Convention for the International Trade in Endangered Species in each year since 1997–98. [178758]

John Healey: HM Customs and Excise reported in their Departmental Annual Reports for 1997–98 and 1998–99 details of Cites seizures for those years. Detailed information for the period April 1999 to December 2000 is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. Customs' Spring Departmental Report 2004 (Cm 6224) contains details of the numbers of Cites seizures for the nine months from 1 April 2003 to 31 December 2003, and the tables show details of seizures for the calendar years 2001–03.

Seizures may be recorded by weight or number and seizures of items such as traditional Chinese medicines may be recorded either according to the individual count of capsules or according to the quantity of containers.

2001	Number of seizures	Number of items seized	Weight of items seized (kg)
Live animals and birds	49	5,196	
Parts and derivatives of endangered species	204	15,908	
	19		711,071
Ivory	40	347	
	4		476,850
Plants	28	3,923	
	1		4,800
Other CITES listed species	45	1,489	
	20		29,376
Preparations of oriental medicines that include parts or derivatives of endangered species	50	37,205	

2002	Number of seizures	Number of items seized	Weight of items seized (kg)
Live animals and birds	114	8,685	
Parts and derivatives of endangered species	238	9,672,827	
	4		227,600
Ivory	29	156	
Plants	13	758	
Other CITES listed species	51	6,664,307	
	30		107,675
Preparations of oriental medicines that include parts or derivatives of endangered species	60	5,597,596	

2003	Number of seizures	Number of items seized	Weight of items seized (kg)
Live animals and birds	99	2,925	
Parts and derivatives of endangered species	144	2,143	
Ivory	33	145	
Plants	15	2,044	
Other CITES listed species	53	18,972	
	29		73.5
Preparations of oriental medicines that include parts or derivatives of endangered species	20	5,042,728	
	18		469.3

Travel Expenses Claims

Mr. Flook: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many self-employed individuals who work as temporary workers under a terms of engagement for services arrangement have appealed against Inland Revenue decisions not to grant in full their claims for travel expenses. [178759]

Dawn Primarolo: The Inland Revenue does not keep central records of disallowed travel expenses claimed by the self-employed or of appeals against refused claims.

The general rule for self-employed working under a contract for services is that travel expenses incurred wholly and exclusively for the purposes of a trade are tax deductible.

UK Tax Burden

Mr. Reed: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate how much extra tax revenue would be generated if the UK tax burden was at the EU average; and if he will make a statement. [178471]

Dawn Primarolo: The latest available figures on total tax revenues and social security contributions across the EU are published in "OECD Revenue Statistics 1965–2002", October 2003 edition: p.18—Table A; p.109—Table 38; and p.111—Table 41. A copy of this publication is available in the Library of the House.

Workless Households

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many and what percentage of children were living in households with no-one in work in each year since 1992. [177903]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. David Willetts, dated 15 June 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about children in workless households. (177903)

The attached table gives the estimates of the number and the percentage of children who were living in workless households for the three months ending May of each year from 1992 to 2003.

As with any sample survey, estimates from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) are subject to sampling error.

Children[1] living in workless households[2]—United Kingdom, three months ending May each year from 1992 to 2003

Thousands, per cent

Year	Children[1] living in workless households[2] Number (thousands)	Percent[3]
1992	2,219	18.8
1993	2,288	19.2
1994	2,398	20.0
1995	2,339	19.4
1996	2,344	19.4
1997	2,163	17.9
1998	2,156	17.9

Children[1] living in workless households[2]—United Kingdom, three months ending May each year from 1992 to 2003

	Thousands, per cent	
	Children[1] living in workless households[2]	
Year[4]	Number (thousands)	Percent[3]
1999	2,086	17.3
2000	1,896	15.7
2001	1,830	15.3
2002	1,889	15.9
2003	1,796	15.2

[1] Children under 16 years.
[2] A workless household is a household that includes at least one person of working age, and in which no one aged 16 or over is in employment.
[3] Children in workless households as a percentage of children in all working age households.
Note:
These LFS estimates have not been adjusted to reflect the 2001 Census results.
Source:
ONS—Labour Force Survey

Unemployment (Coventry)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the levels of long-term *(a)* adult and *(b)* youth unemployment in Coventry over the last seven years. [178143]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Jim Cunningham, dated 15 June 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about unemployment. (178143)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. However, the LFS sample size is too small to give reliable estimates of unemployment in the Coventry South Constituency.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (ISA) for local areas including parliamentary constituencies.

The table below gives total JSA claimants claiming for over 12 months and those aged 18 to 24 years old claiming for over 12 months for the Coventry South constituency. The figures are annual averages for each year since 1997. The data are not seasonally adjusted.

JSA claimants for over 12 months in the Coventry, South constituency annual averages (computerised claims only), 1997-2003

	All ages	18 to 24 years
1997	1,033	154
1998	772	90
1999	649	19
2000	450	10
2001	357	11
2002	319	12
2003	306	11

WORK AND PENSIONS

Asbestos

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the tonnage of materials containing white asbestos in use by the farming industry; and what the total costs of disposal would be at current prices. [176644]

Jane Kennedy: Asbestos is present on a large proportion of farms in the form of asbestos cement sheeting. Much, though not all, of this material contains white asbestos. There is no requirement under the new duty to manage asbestos in non-domestic premises regulation to remove or dispose of asbestos-containing material if it is in good condition. HSE advice is that in this case it is safer to leave it in place and manage it.

The Regulatory Impact Assessment for the new regulation estimated the total cost of compliance for agricultural buildings at a present value of £180 million over the 50 years, 2000–50. There are approximately 163,540 agricultural premises in Great Britain. The cost of disposal was not estimated separately.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when farmers will be expected to be fully compliant with the provisions of the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002. [176650]

Jane Kennedy: The Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002 came into force in November 2002 with the exception of Regulation 4: the Duty to Manage Asbestos in Non-Domestic Premises, which came into force on 21 May this year.

Now that the new duty is in force, HSE expects duty-holders to have adopted a precautionary approach to prevent accidental exposure and to deal with emergency situations. They also expect to see a compliance strategy in place, which should set out how and when the specific steps required in the legislation will be complied with.

Assuming these steps have been taken, HSE inspectors do not necessarily require farmers or any group to be fully compliant with the duty to manage asbestos in these early stages.

However, HSE inspectors will take enforcement action where disregard for the Regulation means that people are being put at serious risk of asbestos exposure.

Carers

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how much carers have received in allowances in each of the last 10 years *(a)* as a total for each year and *(b)* on average for each carer per week; [177707]

(2) how many people have registered as full-time carers in each of the last 10 years. [177708]

Maria Eagle: The Department does not hold records of the number of full-time carers. Carers may be entitled to carer's allowance if they provide a minimum of 35 hours care per week to a severely disabled person in receipt of either attendance allowance or the highest or middle rate of the care component of disability living allowance. They must also meet the other conditions of entitlement. The numbers of carers in receipt of carer's allowance in each of the last 10 years is in Table 1.

Table 1: Invalid care allowance/carer's allowance[1,2]

	Caseload (Thousand)	Expenditure (£ million)	Average weekly amount (£)
1994–95	261	526	39
1995–96	309	617	38
1996–97	348	736	41
1997–98	371	746	39
1998–99	373	782	40
1999–2000	375	835	43
2000–01	375	867	44
2001–02	380	932	47
2002–03	395	995	48
2003–04	434	1,052	46

[1] Caseload figures are rounded to the nearest thousand; expenditure figures are rounded to the nearest million pounds; average weekly amounts in Table 1 are rounded to the nearest pound, and are derived from the annual caseload and expenditure data.

[2] It is a basic principle of the social security system that only one benefit at a time can be paid for the same purpose. For example, even though the circumstances that give rise to entitlement to carer's allowance (CA) and state pension (SP) are different, they are both designed to provide a degree of replacement for lost or foregone income. CA replaces income where the carer is over working age or has had to give up the chance of working to look after a severely disabled person, while SP replaces income in retirement. CA is therefore not payable, or not payable in full, in addition to SP The payment of SP takes precedence, either extinguishing or reducing the payment of CA.

Tables 2 and 3 show expenditure and caseload information for the carer premium in income support and income-based jobseeker's allowance respectively.

It is not possible to disaggregate other benefit payments to carers, as there may more than one reason for receipt (for example, disability or lone parenthood).

Table 2: Income support carer premium[1,2]

	Caseload (Thousand)	Expenditure (£ million)	Carer premium (£)
1993–94	96	60	11.95
1994–95	121	78	12.40
1995–96	150	98	12.60
1996–97	170	115	13.00
1997–98	182	127	13.35
1998–99	188	134	13.65
1999–2000	194	141	13.95
2000–01	201	149	14.15
2001–02[3]	219	278	24.40
2002–03	237	307	24.80
2003–04	Not available	Not available	25.10

[1] Caseload figures are rounded to the nearest thousand; expenditure figures are rounded to the nearest million pounds; average weekly amounts in Table 1 are rounded to the nearest pound, and are derived from the annual caseload and expenditure data.

[2] Nevertheless, the income of a person in these circumstances will be at least as high as the rate of CA, and is usually higher. In addition, where the benefit cannot be paid, the person will keep underlying entitlement to CA, which gives them access to the carer premium, currently £25.55, in the income-related benefits such as housing benefit and council tax benefit, or a similar additional amount through pension credit.

[3] Tables 2 and 3 do not take account of recipients' other income. They include information on income support for the unemployed and minimum income guarantee (information for pension credit in 2003–04 is not currently available).

Table 3: Income-based jobseeker's allowance carer premium[1,2]

	Caseload (Thousand)	Expenditure (£ million)	Carer premium (£)
1996–97	Not available	Not available	13.00
1997–98	8	5	13.35
1998–99	7	5	13.35
1999–2000	6	4	13.65
2000–01	5	4	14.15
2001–02[3]	4	5	24.40
2002–03	4	5	24.80
2003–04	Not available	Not available	25.10

[1] Caseload figures are rounded to the nearest thousand; expenditure figures are rounded to the nearest million pounds; average weekly amounts in Table 1 are rounded to the nearest pound, and are derived from the annual caseload and expenditure data.

[2] Nevertheless, the income of a person in these circumstances will be at least as high as the rate of CA, and is usually higher. In addition, where the benefit cannot be paid, the person will keep underlying entitlement to CA, which gives them access to the carer premium, currently £25.55, in the income-related benefits such as housing benefit and council tax benefit, or a similar additional amount through pension credit.

[3] Tables 2 and 3 do not take account of recipients' other income. They include information on income support for the unemployed and minimum income guarantee.

Note:
The increase in expenditure in Tables 2 and 3 from 2000–01 to 2001–02 reflects a £10 real increase in the carer premium.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what action his Department is taking to support carers. [177709]

Maria Eagle: As part of the Government's National Strategy for Carers, substantial improvements have been made to the financial support available to the carers of severely disabled people from social security benefits. These include extending the availability of carer's allowance to new carers aged 65 and over and for up to eight weeks after the death of the person being cared for, increasing the earnings limit for the benefit and linking it to the national insurance lower earnings limit so that it goes up each year. This means that carers can now earn up to £79 per week net of allowable expenses and still be entitled to the benefit. It is therefore possible for a carer to earn well in excess of £79 per week and be entitled to carer's allowance.

For those entitled to carer's allowance and on low incomes, the carer premium in the income-related benefits and the equivalent amount payable through pension credit has been substantially increased. Carers may also be entitled to other benefits depending on their circumstances. Carers who wish to keep in touch with the labour market can get help, advice and training from personal advisers in Jobcentre Plus.

Departmental Sick Leave

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many days of sick leave were taken in his Department in 2003; how many related to employees suffering *(a)* stress and *(b)* other mental health problems; and what the cost was to his Department. [177525]

Maria Eagle: 1.7 million days sick leave were taken by DWP staff during 2003, of which 187,900 days were for stress, and 293,600 were for other mental health problems.

The total cost to the Department of sick leave during 2003 was around £100 million, of which around £28 million was attributed to stress and other mental health problems.

Source:
DWP Sickness Absence Model.

Health and Safety Executive

Andrew Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many visits by Band Three Inspectors of the Health and Safety Executive in 2003–04 per week were made in *(a)* the north west region and *(b)* the west Midlands region. [176724]

Jane Kennedy: In the year to 3 April 2004 Band 3 operational inspectors in operational groups from the Health and Safety Executive's North West and Midlands Divisions made, on average, 3.25 and 3.9 contacts per week respectively.

During this period new working arrangements were piloted in North West Division with the aim of increasing the amount of time spent by operational inspectors on contact activities. In the period of the pilot (July–December 2003) each operational Band 3 inspector made, on average, 4.4 contacts.

Andrew Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many of the Band Zero and Band One staff in each of the regions of the Health and Safety Executive received performance awards in financial year 2003–04. [176725]

Jane Kennedy: Performance reviews and recommendations for performance awards for the reporting year April 2003 to March 2004 are still being processed. The information will not be available until later in the year.

Andrew Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many retired employees, and at what grade, have subsequently been re-employed by the Health and Safety Executive since 2001; and what plans he has to cease this policy. [176728]

Jane Kennedy: Since 2001 there have been, broken down by grade, the following numbers of re-employed staff:

Grade	*Number of staff*
Band 1 (grade 6 equivalent):	1
Band 2 (grade 7):	6
Band 3 (SEO):	5
Band 4 (HEO):	2
Band 5 (EO):	0
Band 6 (AO/AA):	2

As these individual cases are based on justified business needs, there are no plans to review the current policy until such time as the provisions of the EU Directive "establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation" commonly known as the "Employment Directive" (2000/78/EC) and the provisions specifically relating to discrimination on the grounds of age have been implemented into UK legislation (by the end of 2006).

Incapacity Benefit

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what the average duration of an incapacity benefit claim has been in each year since 1997; [177957]

(2) what has been the average duration of a claim for incapacity benefit in each year since 1995. [178847]

Maria Eagle: Information is not available in the format requested. The available information is in the table.

Incapacity benefits claimants by duration of claims to date

Percentage

	November			
Duration of claim to date	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
0–3 months	5	5	5	5
3–6 months	5	4	5	4
6–12 months	7	7	7	7
1–2 years	11	11	11	10
2–5 years	26	25	23	23
5+ years	46	47	50	51

Notes:
1. The figures provided are for length of incapacity benefits claims to date, as data on the average length of completed claims is unavailable.
2. Reliable information on the duration of claims prior to 2000 is unavailable.

Source:
Incapacity Benefit quarterly figures, 5 per cent. sample.

The incapacity benefits caseload is now broadly stable after more than 20 years of significant growth. However, we are determined to help people on these benefits realise their aspirations of a return to work. The Pathways to Work approach, which combines specialist advice, mandatory work-focused interviews, rehabilitation provision, and financial incentives is the most advanced welfare to work policy for this group anywhere in the world.

Mobile Jobcentres

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many mobile jobcentres have been established; in which areas they have operated; how many people have been obliged to attend work-focused interviews as a result; and how many people have found work as a result. [177900]

Jane Kennedy: We have established no mobile jobcentres. We do however acknowledge the need to reach out to the communities that we serve. We do have mobile information services that go into the community to provide information and advice. They do not carry out work-focused interviews.

For example an Ethnic Minority Outreach service provider in North London uses a mobile bus service to meet customers on their doorsteps, bringing access to a range of job and training opportunities. Action Teams make use of mobile units to reach jobless residents who would not normally register with Jobcentre Plus services. The St. Helens Action Team, for example, reached out to 46 eligible customers with their mobile units in May 2004, placing 27 of them into work.

Departmental Special Advisers

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the visits abroad made by his Department's *(a)* special advisers and *(b)* unpaid advisers without Ministers in their official capacity in each year since 1996–97. [174644]

Maria Eagle: Since 1 April 2002, departmental special advisers have travelled abroad on one occasion, to Boston and Washington, USA at a cost of £4,900.00. Information prior to 1 April 2002 could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The Department has no unpaid advisers.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the external speeches his Department's *(a)* special advisers and *(b)* unpaid advisers have made in their official capacity in each year since 1996–97. [174645]

Maria Eagle: Since 1 April 2002, the Department's special advisers have made no external speeches in an official capacity. Information prior to 1 April 2002 could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The Department has no unpaid advisers.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) if he will list the attributable *(a)* articles and *(b)* contributions that his Department's (i) special advisers and (ii) unpaid advisers have made to newspapers, magazines, journals, books and other media in their official capacity in each year since 1996–97; [174647]

(2) if he will list the attributable interviews that his Department's *(a)* special advisers and *(b)* unpaid advisers have given to newspapers, magazines and other media in their official capacity in each year since 1996–97. [174648]

Maria Eagle: Special advisers' contacts with the media are conducted in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Special Advisers. Since 1 April 2002, the Department's special advisers have given no attributable articles, contributions or interviews to these media. Information prior to 1 April 2002 could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The Department has no unpaid advisers.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the appearances that his Department's *(a)* special advisers and *(b)* unpaid advisers have made before parliamentary select committees in their official capacity in each year since 1996–97. [174650]

Maria Eagle: Since 1 April 2002, the Department's special advisers have made no appearances before parliamentary select committees in their official capacity. Information prior to 1 April 2002 could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The Department has no unpaid advisers.

Disabled Workers

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the measures introduced to improve the working conditions of disabled workers in the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale over the last seven years. [178536]

Maria Eagle: We have a number of measures in place nationally to help improve conditions for disabled people at work, as well as measures to improve their access to services generally. None of these are specific to Rochdale, but all are available to disabled people who live and work there.

From 1996, the employment provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act required most employers of 20 or more staff not to discriminate against, and to make reasonable adjustments for, disabled job applicants or employees; in December 1998, we reduced this threshold to 15 employees. From October this year, the small employer exemption will be removed and most currently excluded occupations, such as police officers, fire-fighters, and partners in business partnerships will be brought within the scope of the Disability Discrimination Act employment provisions.

Jobcentre Plus runs a number of specialist programmes providing help for disabled people, including New Deal for Disabled People, Workstep, Access to Work, the Job Introduction Scheme, and Work Preparation. All these programmes provide practical advice and support to disabled people and their employers to help overcome work-related obstacles resulting from disability. Since 1997–98, there have been year-on-year increases in both numbers helped and programme spend.

To help people access appropriate help, Jobcentre Plus has established a network of Disability Service Teams. The teams are made up of Disability Employment Advisers, Access to Work Advisers and Occupational Psychologists; their services are accessed through local Jobcentres.

Since April 2003, disabled people in work have been receiving financial support through the working tax credit. This is available if a person is working an average of at least 16 hours per week (self-employed or for an employer); and have a disability which puts them at a disadvantage in getting a job. 70,000 families (including over 32,000 adults without children) are benefiting from the disability element within the working tax credit, compared to 38,000 who benefited from the old disabled person's tax credit.

Tax Credits

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimates he has made of the number of his Department's staff who act as appointees of applicants for tax credits. [177954]

Maria Eagle: The information is not available.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Cash Incentive Scheme

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many Cash Incentive Scheme grants were made by each local authority in 2003–04; and what the total value of these grants was in each authority. [178690]

Keith Hill: Information on Cash Incentive Scheme grants made in 2003–04 will not be available until autumn 2004. The number of Cash Incentive grants made and the total expenditure by each local authority in 2002–03 has been made available in the Libraries of the Houses. In England, local authorities reported that 574 Cash Incentive Scheme grants were made, with a value of around £8.95 million.

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his response to Recommendation 18 of the Home Ownership Task Force, if he will commission research into the strategic benefits of Cash Incentive Scheme grants. [178733]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is committed to encouraging social tenants to move into home ownership where they can afford to do so, while minimising unnecessary loss of social housing. The Home Ownership Task Force was established to help with this objective. We have or are already taking forward the majority of its recommendations. Consideration is still being given to the research project on Cash Incentive Schemes recommended by the Task Force alongside other priorities for the limited research funds for 2004–05.

Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* nature and *(b)* value was of contracts, consultancies and other services placed with (i) Deloitte and Touche, (ii) Ernst and Young, (iii) KPMG and (iv) Pricewaterhouse Coopers since 2000–01 by the former Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions and its agencies. [177506]

Yvette Cooper: The value of contracts placed by the former Department for Transport Local Government and the Regions and its agencies for the years 2000–01 and 2001–02 with the suppliers detailed in the question was as follows.

	£
PWC	4,239,936
Ernst and Young	112,000
Deloitte & Touche	860,831
KPMG	2,292,625

The nature of such contracts across the Department and its agencies can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Government Office of the West Midlands

Mr. Flight: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total expenditure on consultants and contractors for the Government Office of the West Midlands was in each year since 1997. [176900]

Yvette Cooper: Detailed expenditure of this type is no longer available for 1997–98. Also, expenditure on "contractors" is not recorded separately from a wide range of general administrative costs. "Consultants" costs are recorded under the heading of professional services for which total expenditure was as follows:

Professional Services

	£
1998–99	41,000
1999–2000	115,000
2000–01	119,000
2001–02	68,000
2002–03	58,000
2003–04	560,000

The 2003–04 data involves a change of definition and is not compatible with previous figures.

Homebuy Loans (London)

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many Homebuy loans were made in each local authority area in London in 2003–04. [178691]

Keith Hill: A total of 1,061 home purchases were completed with Homebuy loans, funded by the Housing Corporation through its Approved Development Programme, in London in 2003–04. The following table shows a breakdown of the total by local authority area.

Local authority	*Number*
Barking and Dagenham	38
Barnet	27
Bexley	48
Brent	21
Bromley	57
Camden	3
Croydon	61
Ealing	42
Enfield	57
Greenwich	91
Hackney	23
Hammersmith and Fulham	12
Haringey	41
Harrow	13
Havering	36
Hillingdon	52
Hounslow	34
Islington	16
Kensington and Chelsea	3
Kingston upon Thames	27
Lambeth	20
Lewisham	46
Merton	25
Newham	24
Redbridge	41
Richmond upon Thames	10
Southwark	17
Sutton	51
Tower Hamlets	15
Waltham Forest	71
Wandsworth	29
Westminster	10
Total	1,061

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many Homebuy loans were made to *(a)* those in social housing, *(b)* those on housing waiting lists and *(c)* key workers in London in 2003–04. [178732]

Keith Hill: 1,061 home purchases with Homebuy loans were completed in London during 2003–04. From a Housing Corporation survey, CORE Sales, at least 211 of these Homebuy loans were given to tenants in social housing and at least 59 to people on housing waiting lists. The Housing Corporation's investment system shows that over 400 of the loans were made to key workers in London.

Local Authority Websites

Mr. Berry: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how the Government are tackling access barriers to disabled people on local government websites. [177020]

Phil Hope: Under the local e-Government programme the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is supporting a national project called LAWS—Local Authority Websites, to develop guidance for local authorities on best practice for designing and managing websites. One of the issues addressed is website accessibility, including for disabled people. Ensuring that their websites are accessible to all their citizens is fundamental to the design of individual authorities' websites. Another national project, e-SB—the Standards Body, will incorporate website accessibility information into the forthcoming website standards for local authorities.

Housing Corporation (Crosby)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much public funding has been spent from the Housing Corporation Programme in Crosby. [177854]

Keith Hill: The following table shows the Housing Corporation Social Housing Grant expenditure in Sefton for the past five years.

	£ million
1999–00	6.711
2000–01	4.768
2001–02	3.816
2002–03	6.000
2003–04	4.663

The Housing Corporation gathers information at local authority level, therefore information for the constituency of Crosby is not available. Crosby is within the local authority of Sefton.

Regional Assemblies (Referendums)

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister on what date the proposed referendums on regional assemblies will take place; and whether the voting will be all-postal. [178719]

Mr. Raynsford: The Government intend to hold the referendums this autumn by all-postal ballot. We will be laying orders to that effect this summer.

Social Housing

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* local authority and *(b)* housing association lettings were made in each Government Office Region in each year since 1980. [178734]

Keith Hill: The number of local authority and housing association lettings made in each Government Office region are tabled as follows.

In the table, information on local authority lettings is provided for the years 1979–80 to 2002–03 and on housing association lettings for the years 1995–96 to 2003–04.

Social sector lettings in England and the regions

	England	North East	Yorkshire and the Humber	East Midlands	East of England	London	South East	South West	West Midlands	North West
Total lettings by local authority										
1979–80	412,200	35,400	54,300	38,000	37,900	57,900	44,400	29,800	51,000	63,600
1980–81	444,000	39,800	57,500	35,900	n/a	68,200	n/a	27,800	53,600	67,300
1981–82	415,500	36,300	52,800	32,700	32,400	81,400	41,000	25,700	47,400	65,900
1982–83	439,500	40,500	55,500	36,600	35,200	71,800	44,900	29,200	52,600	73,100
1983–84	429,100	36,800	57,400	35,600	36,200	70,200	43,500	29,200	50,200	70,000
1984–85	429,300	38,900	54,700	36,400	34,100	66,200	45,300	29,600	53,300	70,700
1985–86	436,600	38,900	59,800	36,800	36,600	63,900	45,600	29,500	55,900	69,700
1986–87	430,200	39,600	59,300	36,900	33,600	59,800	44,800	29,200	56,100	70,900
1987–88	425,800	38,200	57,400	34,500	33,300	59,200	43,300	27,900	57,100	75,000
1988–89	410,200	38,600	55,400	33,400	30,500	58,300	42,700	26,800	53,300	71,400
1989–90	390,300	37,800	51,200	30,600	30,700	57,300	40,600	25,500	49,200	67,300
1990–91	400,900	35,000	51,900	31,400	34,400	65,200	41,200	27,500	48,700	65,700
1991–92	406,500	36,800	52,200	31,300	32,200	71,400	40,300	28,300	51,500	62,500
1992–93	399,900	37,000	52,200	32,000	31,400	67,000	38,900	27,300	50,700	63,200
1993–94	404,900	36,400	51,600	34,500	32,500	65,800	38,600	28,700	53,400	63,400
1994–95	407,900	39,000	56,800	34,300	31,500	62,900	35,600	27,300	53,600	66,900
1995–96	415,200	41,000	58,700	35,500	31,900	61,300	34,200	27,400	54,000	71,200
1996–97	422,000	42,200	59,900	39,100	32,100	62,300	32,400	26,700	56,200	71,000
1997–98	403,900	41,500	56,900	38,200	31,400	57,600	30,300	24,300	53,200	70,500
1998–99	379,200	39,500	56,000	37,400	30,700	48,200	28,300	21,400	49,300	68,500
1999–2000	353,900	38,600	55,900	33,900	29,000	42,100	25,800	18,800	45,200	64,700
2000–01	326,600	36,500	53,300	32,500	27,200	39,300	23,800	16,500	40,100	57,300
2001–02	289,700	29,700	49,300	29,200	25,700	35,200	20,500	15,400	33,600	51,100
2002–03	272,800	26,900	49,000	29,100	22,700	34,300	21,200	14,200	31,000	44,400
England										
Total lettings by housing association										
1995–96	135,700	8,100	22,200	11,500	9,700	13,800	11,600	13,900	23,000	21,900
1996–97	187,200	9,600	29,300	16,500	13,500	20,000	15,500	17,800	35,500	29,500
1997–98	202,800	10,000	33,600	20,300	15,400	22,300	16,500	19,300	36,100	29,400
1998–99	212,000	11,300	35,300	21,300	15,600	24,000	18,800	20,300	35,300	30,100

Social sector lettings in England and the regions

	England	North East	Yorkshire and the Humber	East Midlands	East of England	London	South East	South West	West Midlands	North West
1999–2000	214,300	11,300	37,500	21,100	16,100	24,900	21,500	19,700	32,800	29,500
2000–01	214,000	11,600	39,100	20,200	16,900	26,800	20,100	18,800	32,400	28,100
2001–02	224,200	15,500	42,800	20,400	16,600	29,100	20,200	18,100	32,600	29,000
2002–03	225,100	15,400	44,500	21,400	16,700	28,100	19,900	19,000	32,100	27,900
2003–04	212,400	13,100	41,100	21,300	15,600	28,400	18,400	18,400	28,900	27,200

Notes:
n/a = denotes that information is unavailable.
1. Regional totals include estimates for non-response.
2. The number of lettings given by local authorities includes any transfers and exchanges, as well as secure and non-secure lettings.
3. The number of lettings given by housing associations includes those for general as well as supported needs.
Figures for 1995–96 include only lettings given for general needs.

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of new social housing for rent built in each year since 1990 had three or more bedrooms. [178735]

Keith Hill: The percentages of registered social landlord (RSL) new build completions in England that had at least three bedrooms are shown in the table. Equivalent figures for local authority new build are not readily available.

	Percentage
1990–91	20
1991–92	20
1992–93	26
1993–94	31
1994–95	34
1995–96	35
1996–97	36
1997–98	39
1998–99	38
1999–2000	37
2000–01	35
2001–02	33
2002–03	38
2003–04	32

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will add to his Department's Public Service Agreement 5 a performance indicator for the number of families with children living in overcrowded housing. [178736]

Keith Hill: No. The Office's Public Service Agreement 5 underpins the Government's commitment to improve the balance between supply and demand for housing. In this context, the main function of a performance indicator for overcrowding would be to monitor progress in alleviating the position of those at the bottom of the housing ladder. However, PSA5 already incorporates such an indicator— number of statutory homeless households with children in temporary accommodation. The further indicator proposed here would simply cover the same ground, albeit from a slightly different perspective.

Temporary Accommodation (Children)

Mr. Willis: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many children were living in temporary accommodation in each year since 1997, broken down by region; and if he will make a statement. [178148]

Yvette Cooper: Information on the number of children living in temporary accommodation is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Information on the number of households that contain dependent children and/or expectant mothers in various types of temporary accommodation has been collected since March 2002. The following table shows this information by Government Office Region for all eight quarters since March 2002.

Homeless households[1] with dependent children in all forms of temporary accommodation by Government Office Region

	2002				2003			
	March	June	September	December	March	June	September	December
North East[2]	270	440	1,220	280	220	300	250	360
North West	990	1,110	1,200	1,130	1,230	1,280	1,450	1,220
Yorkshire and Number	800	970	960	1,080	1,160	1,190	1,140	1,120
East Midlands	1,350	1,620	1,560	1,500	1,650	1,770	1,890	1,930
West Midlands	1,030	800	1,100	800	870	860	1,090	1,130
East of England	3,840	3,710	3,850	4,030	4,740	5,070	5,460	4,990
London	20,860	26,320	31,190	29,120	31,100	31,400	33,660	34,380
South East	7,560	8,270	9,110	7,310	8,760	9,170	8,800	8,540
South West	3,110	3,710	4,030	2,740	3,350	4,250	4,100	3,480
England[3]	39,810	46,950	54,220	47,980	53,070	55,280	57,840	57,140

[1] Households in accommodation arranged by local authorities pending inquiries or after being accepted as homeless under the 1996 Act (including any residual cases under the 1985 Act).
[2] Figures for December 2002 onwards reflect changes in lettings policies by a local authority in the region.
[3] Totals may not equal the sum of components because of rounding.

Urban Regeneration

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what funding has been allocated to the Liveability Fund for financial year *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06, broken down by region; and what funding plans are in place to continue the work of the Liveability Fund from financial year 2005–06 onwards. [178107]

Keith Hill: The Liveability Fund allocations, by region, for these two years are as follows:

Region	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
East of England	4,310,500	4,425,000
East Midlands	4,010,000	4,030,000
London	4,680,000	4,555,000
North East	3,664,730	3,760,000
North West	4,170,000	4,170,000
South East	4,692,400	4,105,000
South West	4,534,640	4,425,000
West Midlands	4,769,636	4,650,000
Yorkshire and the Humber	4,441,000	4,380,000
Total	39,272,906	38,500,000

Funding plans for future years are currently under consideration as part of the on-going 2004 Spending Review.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what funding from *(a)* his Department and *(b)* non-departmental public bodies has been allocated to urban regeneration companies for financial year (i) 2005–06 and (ii) 2006–07. [178149]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not provide funding directly to any urban regeneration company (URC). All funding is provided by the partners in each URC. This usually comprises the Regional Development Agency (RDA), the local authority or authorities, and English Partnerships (EP). The following table shows the revenue funding that EP and the various RDAs estimate will be allocated to the individual URCs for 2005–06 and 2006–07, based on current projections. Capital funding for development projects is not normally provided to the URCs themselves; expenditure on projects is incurred by the partners on the basis of agreed strategies in pursuit of URC objectives.

Revenue Allocations to URCs

£

URC	*2005–06*	*2006–07*
Bradford City Regeneration	845,000	845,000
CPR Regeneration	544,000	544,000
Catalyst Corby	544,000	544,000
Derby Cityscape	544,000	544,000
Gloucester Heritage	544,000	544,000
Hull Citybuild	693,000	693,000
Leicester Regeneration	540,000	560,000
Liverpool Vision	771,000	771,000
New East Manchester	713,000	736,000
RegencoSandwell	544,000	544,000
Sheffield One	746,000	746,000
Sunderland Arc	660,000	660,000
The New Swindon Company	544,000	544,000

Revenue Allocations to URCs

£

URC	*2005–06*	*2006–07*
Tees Valley Regeneration	623,000	623,000
Walsall	544,000	544,000
West Lakes Renaissance	200,000	200,000
Total	9,599,000	9,642,000

Note:
The West Lakes URC does not receive revenue funding from English Partnerships (EP). All other figures are collated EP and Regional Development Agency estimates. Where appropriate, the figures include funding to cover non-recoverable VAT.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Action Against Business Crime Group

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which towns and communities in Wales have benefited from Action Against Business Crime Group grants; and how much grant has been allocated to each town or community, broken down by constituency. [177205]

Paul Goggins: The Action Against Business Crime Group has not yet allocated funds to any individual towns or communities. The Home Office agreed a contract with the British Retail Consortium to set up the Action against Business Crime Group in March 2004 and Government funding has been provided to enable the Group to set up partnerships in priority locations. The Home Office will work with the Group to identify the criteria for priority locations, but it will be for them to decide how best to allocate the funding provided in order to meet the agreed outcomes.

Antisocial Behaviour Orders

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders were *(a)* sought and *(b)* achieved in each district council area in Gloucestershire for each year since the introduction of this legislation. [178462]

Ms Blears: Antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) have been available, on application to the magistrates courts, since 1 April 1999. The Police Reform Act 2002 authorised the magistrates courts and the Crown court to issue ASBOs on conviction, and the county courts (from 1 April 2003) to issue ASBOs on application, alongside other proceedings. Information, as notified to the Home Office, is given in the table, by local authority area and result, up to 31 December 2003 (latest available), on the number of ASBOs within Gloucestershire.

Number of ASBO applications, by result, and the number given on conviction, in Gloucestershire, by local authority area, as notified to the Home Office, 1 April 1999[1] to 31 December 2003

	ASBOs on application[2]			*ASBOs on conviction*	
Period/local authority area	*Total applications*	*Total refused*	*Total issued*	*Total issued*	*Total issued on application/ on conviction*
1 June 2000 to 31 December 2000					
Cheltenham borough council	1	—	1	n/a	1
Forest of Dean district council	1	—	1	n/a	1
Sub-total	2	—	2	n/a	2
1 January 2001 to 31 December 2001					
Cheltenham borough council	2	—	2	n/a	2
Sub-total	2	—	2	n/a	2

Number of ASBO applications, by result, and the number given on conviction, in Gloucestershire, by local authority area, as notified to the Home Office, 1 April 1999[1] to 31 December 2003

	ASBOs on application[2]			ASBOs on conviction	
Period/local authority area	Total applications	Total refused	Total issued	Total issued	Total issued on application/ on conviction
1 January 2002 to 31 December 2002					
Cheltenham borough council	1	—	1	—	1
Sub-total	1	—	1	—	1
1 January 2003 to 31 December 2003					
Cheltenham borough council	2	—	2	—	2
Gloucester city council	—	—	—	1	1
Stroud district council	2	—	2	—	2
Sub-total	4	—	4	1	5
Total	9	—	9	1	10

n/a = Not applicable.
[1] From 1 April 1999 to 31 May 2DOO data were collected by police force area on ASBO numbers only. During this period no ASBOs were reported to the Home Office for Gloucestershire.
[2] Only covers applications dealt with by 31 December 2003.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders have been *(a)* sought and *(b)* granted in the Greater London area; and if he will make a statement. [177818]

Ms Blears: Antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) have been available, on application to the magistrates courts, since 1 April 1999. The Police Reform Act 2002 authorised the magistrates courts and the Crown court to issue ASBOs on conviction, and the county courts (from 1 April 2003) to issue ASBOs on application, alongside other proceedings. Information, as notified to the Home Office, is given in the table, by result, up to 31 December 2003 (latest available), on the number of ASBOs within Greater London.

Number of ASBO applications, by result, and the number given on conviction, in Greater London, as notified to the Home Office, 1 April 1999 to 31 December 2003

ASBOs on application	Number
Total applications	121
Total refused	9
Total issued	112
ASBOs on conviction	
Total issued	42
Total issued on application/on conviction	154

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders have been issued in the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale. [178507]

Ms Blears: Antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) have been available to the courts since 1 April 1999. From commencement, up to 31 December 2003 (latest available), the Home Office has been notified of 20 ASBOs issued within the Rochdale metropolitan borough council area, in which the constituency of Rochdale is located.

Asylum Seekers

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps the Government are taking to improve the removals process and to ensure that it is transparent and fair. [151474]

Mr. Browne: The Government are committed to identifying and removing those who have no right to be here by ensuring a transparent and fair system where all applicants are treated humanely and fairly and only seeking to return those who have no legal basis of stay in the UK. This is done by having an internal complaints procedure and an independent appeal system established by Parliament to resolve disputes between the Home Office and applicants who feel that their applications for leave to remain or asylum have not been properly assessed or the correct decision reached.

We are constantly striving to improve the way this process works by continually monitoring and reviewing internal procedures and practices.

Mr. Flight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was spent on the removal of failed asylum seekers; and how many asylum seekers were removed, in each year since 1997. [173576]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 18 May 2004]:* The information is as follows:

(a) The cost of the removal of failed asylum seekers is not disaggregated from the overall costs of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) and therefore not readily available. Any attempt to calculate the cost of removal of failed asylum seekers would need to take into account a large number of factors and this could be done only at disproportionate cost. However the total public spending for IND is set out in the published Home Office report.

(b) The number of asylum seekers who were removed in each year since 1997 is shown in the table.

Removals and voluntary departures[1] of asylum applicants, excluding dependants, 1997 to 2003

	Principal applicants	Dependants[2]	Total[2]
1997	7,165	n/a	n/a
1998	6,990	n/a	n/a
1999	7,665	n/a	n/a
2000	8,980	n/a	n/a

Removals and voluntary departures[1] of asylum applicants, excluding dependants, 1997 to 2003

	Principal applicants	Dependants[2]	Total[2]
2001	9,285	1,495	10,780
2002[3]	10,740	3,170	13,910
2003[3]	12,490	4,550	17,040

n/a = Not available.

[1] Includes persons departing 'Voluntarily' after enforcement action had been initiated against them, persons leaving under Assisted Voluntary Return Programmes run by the International Organisation for Migration, and removals on safe third country grounds.

[2] Data on dependants removed have only been collected since April 2001.

[3] Provisional figures.

Note:

Figures rounded to the nearest five, with* = one or two, and may not sum due to rounding.

Church Yards

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for closure of church yards have been refused in the past five years. [174282]

Paul Goggins: The Home Office does not keep a record of this information. However, the majority of applications that fail do so because they do not fall within the main criteria for closure as agreed by the Home Office, local authority representatives and representatives of the Church of England:

There is no proper room for new graves;

Further burials would be contrary to decency;

Discontinuance of burials would prevent or mitigate nuisance;

Further burials would constitute a health risk.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter to him dated 27 April from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mr. Ihsan Mehrobi and Ms Bethan Galliers. [178946]

Mr. Blunkett: I wrote to my right hon. Friend on 10 June 2004.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter to him dated 22 April from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mr. N. Sibanda. [178947]

Mr. Blunkett: I wrote to my right hon. Friend on 10 June 2004.

Court Attendance (Merseyside)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to reduce the non-attendance of witnesses and defendants in Merseyside. [170534]

Paul Goggins: The Government's Criminal Case Management Programme will reduce the non-attendance of defendants and witnesses. It is made up of three complementary strands: ensuring that charges are more appropriately brought; providing victims and witnesses with proper care and attention; and ensuring that trials are effectively managed.

Witness care units are currently at the planning stage in Merseyside and will be introduced for Crown courts towards the end of this year and in the magistrates courts in 2005. As part of its delivery plan to improve public confidence in the criminal justice system, Merseyside Criminal Justice Board carried out a survey examining reasons for witness non-attendance. The results will be used as part of the planning process for the introduction of witness care units. For example, one petty sessional area found that if witnesses were contacted by telephone shortly before they were due to appear, attendance increased, and consequently, this practice is being rolled out across Merseyside.

The Effective Trial Management Programme will be implemented in Merseyside in November. It includes specific measures to improve defendant attendance at court hearings through the early communication of the benefits of co-operating with the process and the potential consequences of non-attendance, as well as improved enforcement procedures for non-attendance.

There are a number of warrant enforcement initiatives in place in Merseyside to ensure that defendants are brought to justice for failing to appear in court. Bench warrants in Merseyside are circulated on the Police National Computer as soon as they are received from the courts, with priority given to persistent offender and street crime offences. Merseyside police have also run Operation 'Cardsharp' in which defendants were sent letters following their failure to appear, informing them that a warrant had been issued and advising them to surrender to the court or face police visits. This initiative proved to be a success, with defendants surrendering themselves to the court after receiving the letter, and over 1,000 warrants executed in the month the operation was running. It is continuing to operate successfully in Merseyside, and has now been recognised as best practice nationally.

Drug Offences (London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* arrests have been made, *(b)* convictions have been obtained and *(c)* cautions have been issued in (i) Greater London and (ii) each London borough for offences relating to (A) possession and (B) dealing in (1) Class A, (2) Class B and (3) Class C drugs in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [177180]

Ms Blears: Information collected centrally on arrests is broken down only into the main offence groups. Within the "drug offences" group we are unable to identify different classes of drugs or different kinds of offences.

The information contained in the tables relates to persons found guilty of possession of, or dealing in Class A, B and C drugs, 1998 to 2002, in each borough in outer London and each magistrates court in inner London (it

is not possible from the statistics collected centrally to identify boroughs in inner London). The figures include persons found guilty at the Crown court when committed for trial or sentence from the courts/ boroughs shown. Caution data cannot be broken down beyond police force area in the statistics collected centrally, and is given as a total for the Metropolitan Police and City of London Police Force area.

Statistics on court proceedings and cautions for 2003 will be published in the autumn.

Number[1] of persons cautioned by the Metropolitan or City of London Police, or found guilty of certain drug offences in Greater London[2] by magistrates court/London Borough: 2002[1]

	Possession					
	Class A drug		Class B drug		Class C drug	
	Cautioned	Found guilty	Cautioned	Found guilty	Cautioned	Found guilty
Inner London magistrates courts[3]						
City of London Police						
Guildhall Justice Rooms	3_	23	3_	54	3_	3_
Total City of London Police	31	23	448	54	1	3_
Metropolitan police						
Bow Street	3_	206	3_	286	3_	3
Camberwell Green/Tower Bridge	3_	227	3_	338	3_	1
Greenwich/Woolwich	3_	105	3_	333	3_	3_
Highbury Corner	3_	164	3_	314	3_	1
Horseferry Road	3_	121	3_	266	3_	3_
Marylebone	3_	—	3_	4	3_	3_
South Western	3_	75	3_	312	3_	3_
Thames	3_	205	3_	448	3_	3_
West London	3_	124	3_	435	3_	1
Outer London boroughs						
Metropolitan Police						
Barking and Dagenham	3_	51	3_	185	3_	3_
Barnet	3_	21	3_	145	3_	3_
Bexley	3_	31	3_	84	3_	3_
Brent	3_	97	3_	237	3_	3_
Bromley	3_	33	3_	117	3_	3_
Croydon	3_	51	3_	236	3_	3_
Ealing	3_	131	3_	212	3_	3_
Enfield	3_	42	3_	142	3_	3_
Haringey	3_	104	3_	348	3_	2
Harrow	3_	37	3_	80	3_	3_
Havering	3_	107	3_	88	3_	3_
Hillingdon	3_	55	3_	182	3_	3_
Hounslow	3_	76	3_	166	3_	3_
Kingston-upon-Thames	3_	66	3_	71	3_	3_
Merton	3_	15	3_	79	3_	3_
Newham	3_	92	3_	271	3_	3_
Redbridge	3_	26	3_	99	3_	3_
Richmond-upon-Thames	3_	17	3_	95	3_	3_
Sutton	3_	15	3_	61	3_	3_
Waltham Forest	3_	50	3_	156	3_	1
Total Metropolitan Police	595	2,344	10,612	5,790	31	9
Total Greater London	626	2,367	11,060	5,844	32	9

	Dealing					
	Class A drug		Class B drug		Class C drug	
	Cautioned	Found guilty	Cautioned	Found guilty	Cautioned	Found guilty
Inner London magistrates courts[3]						
City of London Police						
Guildhall Justice Rooms	3_	12	3_	5	3_	3_
Total City of London Police	595	12	10,612	5	31	3_
Metropolitan police						
Bow Street	3_	20	3_	16	3_	2
Camberwell Green/Tower Bridge	3_	104	3_	52	3_	3_
Greenwich/Woolwich	3_	74	3_	38	3_	3_
Highbury Corner	3_	97	3_	41	3_	3_
Horseferry Road	3_	58	3_	26	3_	3_
Marylebone	3_	3_	3_	1	3_	3_
South Western	3_	24	3_	17	3_	3_
Thames	3_	104	3_	33	3_	3_
West London	3_	47	3_	23	3_	1
Outer London boroughs						
Metropolitan Police						
Barking and Dagenham	3_	4	3_	11	3_	3_
Barnet	3_	18	3_	14	3_	3_
Bexley	3_	6	3_	12	3_	3_
Brent	3_	24	3_	22	3_	3_

	Dealing					
	Class A drug		Class B drug		Class C drug	
	Cautioned	Found guilty	Cautioned	Found guilty	Cautioned	Found guilty
Bromley	[3]	8	[3]	8	[3]	[3]
Croydon	[3]	34	[3]	23	[3]	[3]
Ealing	[3]	36	[3]	15	[3]	[3]
Enfield	[3]	1	[3]	3	[3]	[3]
Haringey	[3]	24	[3]	27	[3]	[3]
Harrow	[3]	10	[3]	8	[3]	[3]
Havering	[3]	8	[3]	6	[3]	[3]
Hillingdon	[3]	548	[3]	197	[3]	3
Hounslow	[3]	13	[3]	15	[3]	[3]
Kingston-upon-Thames	[3]	11	[3]	10	[3]	[3]
Merton	[3]	4	[3]	8	[3]	[3]
Newham	[3]	33	[3]	23	[3]	[3]
Redbridge	[3]	12	[3]	11	[3]	[3]
Richmond-upon-Thames	[3]	5	[3]	12	[3]	[3]
Sutton	[3]	13	[3]	4	[3]	[3]
Waltham Forest	[3]	12	[3]	12	[3]	[3]
Total Metropolitan Police	33	1,352	179	688	[3]	6
Total Greater London	628	1,364	10,791	693	31	6

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis
[2] Information held centrally does not allow a breakdown of cases by borough in the inner London area
[3] Not available

Criminal Records Bureau

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of how long the Criminal Records Bureau is taking to process applications from voluntary organisations. [174668]

Ms Blears: Information is not available to determine how long the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) is taking to process applications from voluntary organisations; this information is not held centrally.

The CRB continually assesses its performance against its service standards across all sectors and aims to make further improvements to the service it provides. Since June 2003, the CRB has been issuing on average 93 per cent. of all Standard and Enhanced Disclosures within two and four weeks respectively, against published service standards of 90 per cent.

Drug Treatment and Testing Orders

Phil Sawford: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many drug treatment and testing orders have been issued in *(a)* England and Wales and *(b)* Scotland in each year for which figures are available. [174850]

Paul Goggins: The number of drug treatment and testing orders (DTTOs) made since roll-out of the order across England and Wales in October 2000 is:

	Number
2000–01 (six months)	1,256
2001–02	4,854
2002–03	6,145
2003–04	8,515

The number of DTTOs imposed by Scottish courts since 2000 is:

	Number
2000	59
2001	198
2002	342
2003	348
2004 (to 21 May 2004)	171

Dungavel Family Unit

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received from the Church and Nation Committee of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland about the family unit at Dungavel. [176553]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* My predecessor, my right hon. Friend, the Member for Stretford and Urmston, (Beverley Hughes) met representatives of the Church and Nation Committee of the Church of Scotland at the end of October 2003. Discussions included the family unit at Dungavel.

Durham Jail

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the total capacity in Durham jail in each of the next 10 years. [176669]

Paul Goggins: The operational capacity at Her Majesty's Prison Durham, as at Friday 28 May, is 638 for male prisoners and 110 for female prisoners.

Following the change of function, the Area Manager will set the operational capacity of Her Majesty's Prison Durham taking into account control, security the proper operation of the planned regime and the alterations that are currently being made to parts of the residential accommodation.

It is not possible to give figures for each of the next 10 years.

Gas Cartridge Weapons

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many self-contained gas cartridge weapons were surrendered to the police on or before 30 April; [175483]

(2) how many firearm certificates were issued to owners of self-contained gas cartridge weapons on or before 30 April; [175484]

(3) how many self-contained gas cartridge weapons he estimates there are in the UK. [175485]

Caroline Flint: I understand from the Association of Chief Police Officers that as at 30 April a total of 1,524 guns had been surrendered and a further 5,791 entered on a firearms certificate.

Graves

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to allow the re-use and relocating of graves; and if he will make a statement. [168050]

Paul Goggins: The current public consultation exercise "Burial law and policy in the 21st Century: the need for a sensitive and sustainable approach" seeks views on the existing arrangements for providing cemeteries and the possibility of re-using old ones. The results of this exercise, which is part of the on-going review of burial law and ends on 13 July 2004, will help to inform the Government's decision on whether to allow the re-use of graves in future. The relocation of graves is already permissible with the proper authority.

Immigration Appeals

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of legal costs for the future expected hearings relating to *(a)* detention under the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 and *(b)* deprivation of nationality under the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002, in respect of Treasury Solicitor and Counsel fees; and if he will make a statement. [174145]

Mr. Browne: Legal costs will depend on how many people are detained/deprived in the future, and to what level they appeal. As none of the current cases so far has reached its conclusion and we do not know about future numbers, it is not possible to make any realistic estimate of future expenditure.

Iraq

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what powers Her Majesty's Inspector has to report on prison facilities in Iraq. [176311]

Paul Goggins: Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons has no powers to report on prison facilities in Iraq.

National Criminal Intelligence Service

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* permanent and *(b)* seconded staff were employed at the National Criminal Intelligence Service in each of the last five years. [173134]

Caroline Flint: Records for the numbers of staff employed by the National Criminal Intelligence Service show the following:

	Directly employed staff	*Seconded staff*	*Attached staff*	*Total*
1999[1]	310	233	52	595
2000[1]	316	227	49	592
2001[1]	419	257	50	726
2002[1]	470	293	37	800
2003[2]	745	254	45	1,044

[1] Based on April data.
[2] Based on November data.

National Minorities Convention

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what *(a)* representations his Department has received and *(b)* meetings his Department has had with representatives of (i) national minorities, (ii) ethnic groups and (iii) others in respect of his Department's assessment of the Government's compliance with the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. [175399]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* The information is as follows:

(a) The Government have received written representations on the Government's 2nd compliance report under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities from the following organisations and members of Parliament:

UK Race and European Network (UKREN);

National Travellers Action Group;

Cornish National Minority Steering Group;

Cornwall 2000;

Minority Rights Group;

Jean Corston MP (as Chair of the Joint Committee on Human Rights); and

Lord Lester

(b) Home Office officials have had one meeting with non-governmental organisations in connection with the 2nd compliance report. That meeting took place on 20 April 2004 with representative of the Cornish National Minority Steering Group, Cornwall 2000 and the Federal Union of European Nationalities.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to complete his Department's contribution to the Government's compliance report to the Council of Europe under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. [175401]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office is co-ordinating the Government's second compliance report under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and we hope to complete a first draft later in the summer. We will circulate the draft widely to non-governmental organisations for comment and aim to submit the final version to the Council of Europe in the autumn.

On-the-spot Fines

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many on-the-spot fines have been issued in each local authority in the last five years, broken down by region and listed in descending order. [172922]

Alun Michael: I have been asked to reply.

Within Defra's area of responsibility local authorities in England are able to issue fixed penalty notices for offences related to litter, dog fouling and, since 31 March, graffiti and fly-posting. They can also issue fixed penalty notices for night time noise offences but, until 31 March, only if they elected to do so. Only information for each is available in the form requested and the following information shows the litter fixed penalty notices issued in each local authority in the last five years. Local authorities that are not named did not issue any fixed penalty notices for litter during these periods.

1998–99

Local authority	*Number of fines issued*
East Midlands	0
East of England	
Colchester BC	69
Basildon DC	13
St. Albans CC	2
London	
Westminster CC	3,486
LB Hackney	520
LB Wandsworth	242
LB Greenwich	120
LB Ealing	100
RB of Kensington and Chelsea	86
LB Tower Hamlets	43
LB Richmond upon Thames	1
North East	
Darlington BC	1
North West	
Wycombe DC	11
Restormel BC	9
Warrington BC	1
South East	
Swale BC	4
Brighton and Hove BC	1
Canterbury CC	1
Portsmouth CC	1
South West	
S Somerset DC	9
Mid Devon DC	2
West Midlands	0
Yorkshire and Humber	
Bradford CC	54
Ribble Valley BC	1

1999–2000

Local authority	*Number of fines issued*
East Midlands	0
East of England	
Colchester BC	47
Basildon DC	13
Broxbourne BC	4
St Albans CC	4
Braintree DC	2
London	
Westminster CC	2,076
LB Ealing	310
LB Tower Hamlets	206
RB of Kensington and Chelsea	126
LB Wandsworth	46

1999–2000

Local authority	*Number of fines issued*
North East	
Middlesbrough CC	44
Darlington BC	14
North West	
Hyndburn BC	4
Warrington BC	2
South East	
Canterbury CC	28
Swale BC	6
Crawley BC	2
Portsmouth CC	1
South West	
S Somerset DC	3
E Devon DC	2
West Midlands	0
Yorkshire and Humber	
Bradford MDC	30

2000–01

Local authority	*Number of fines issued*
East Midlands	
S Northamptonshire DC	1
East of England	
Colchester BC	35
Braintree DC	16
Basildon DC	15
Broxbourne BC	9
St Albans CC	6
Maldon DC	2
London	
LB Ealing	489
RB of Kensington and Chelsea	466
LB Lambeth	321
LB Tower Hamlets	250
LB Lewisham	149
LB Redbridge	121
LB Wandsworth	64
LB Hammersmith and Fulham	13
LB Richmond upon Thames	4
North East	
Middlesbrough CC	46
Darlington BC	29
S Tyneside DC	12
North West	
Hyndburn BC	11
Ribble Valley BC	1
South East	
Southampton CC	63
New Forest DC	12
Maidstone BC	2
Swale BC	2
Canterbury CC	1
South West	
Christchurch BC	18
Bournemouth BC	6
Bath and North East Somerset	1
Exeter CC	1
West Midlands	
Birmingham CC	59
Dudley DC	15

2000–01

Local authority	*Number of fines issued*
Yorkshire and Humber	
Bradford MDC	7

2001–02

Local authority	*Number of fines issued*
East Midlands	
Gedling DC	13
East of England	
Colchester BC	54
Broxbourne BC	30
Braintree DC	11
Tendring DC	3
Basildon DC	2
Milton Keynes BC	2
St. Albans CC	2
London	
Westminster CC	[1]7,862
RB of Kensington and Chelsea	643
LB Lewisham	513
LB Ealing	504
LB Lambeth	309
LB Wandsworth	197
LB Hammersmith and Fulham	195
LB Greenwich	159
LB Barking and Dagenham	84
LB Redbridge	14
LB Enfield	8
North East	
Newcastle upon Tyne CC	117
Middlesbrough CC	99
Stockton-on-Tees DC	46
Sedgefield DC	26
Darlington BC	14
N Tyneside BC	1
North West	
Oldham BC	23
Hyndburn BC	11
Burnley BC	1
South East	
Southampton CC	68
Brighton and Hove BC	52
Wycombe DC	17
Thanet DC	8
Maidstone BC	6
Portsmouth CC	1
South West	
E Devon DC	1
Exeter CC	1
West Midlands	
Birmingham CC	339
Dudley DC	29
Sandwell BC	24
Rugby BC	5
Wolverhampton CC	1
Yorkshire and Humber	
Bradford MDC	60
Rotherham DC	60

[1] Westminster figures for 2001–02 includes figures for 2000–01, which were not returned separately.

2002–03

Local authority	*Number of fines issued*
East Midlands	
Blaby DC	3
S Kesteven DC	1
East of England	
Luton BC	42
Broxbourne BC	36
Colchester BC	33
Tendring DC	32
St. Albans CC	28
Stevenage BC	10
Braintree DC	7
Chelmsford BC	5
Basildon DC	4
St. Edmundsbury BC	4
Maldon DC	3
Forest Heath DC	2
London	
Westminster CC	8,547
RB of Kensington and Chelsea	539
LB Lewisham	272
LB Southwark	258
LB Haringey	152
LB Newham	124
LB Barking and Dagenham	75
LB Waltham Forest	68
LB Tower Hamlets	65
LB Enfield	42
LB Greenwich	40
LB Wandsworth	37
LB Islington	14
LB Redbridge	10
LB Richmond upon Thames	5
North East	
Newcastle upon Tyne CC	239
Stockton-on-Tees DC	108
Redcar and Cleveland DC	60
Darlington BC	14
N Tyneside BC	3
North West	
Wigan BC	294
Carlisle CC	108
Ribble Valley BC	55
Burnley BC	41
Oldham BC	22
Rossendale BC	17
Hyndburn BC	16
Allerdale BC	2
Manchester CC	2
Chorley BC	1
Warrington BC	1
South East	
Southampton CC	95
Milton Keynes BC	64
Wycombe DC	27
Maidstone BC	9
Canterbury CC	4
Portsmouth CC	1
Thanet DC	1
South West	
N Cornwall DC	9
Exeter CC	6
Restormel BC	2
E Devon DC	1
Sedgemoor DC	1
West Midlands	
Birmingham CC	740
Sandwell BC	102
Dudley DC	19
Wolverhampton CC	3
Coventry CC	1

2002–03

Local authority	*Number of fines issued*
Yorkshire and Humber	
Rotherham DC	208
Sheffield CC	76
Barnsley MBC	10

Parole

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many life sentence prisoners were recalled to custody during each of the last 48 months; and what the reasons for recall were. [168022]

Paul Goggins: The numbers of life sentence prisoners recalled to custody from 1 April 2000 onwards are shown in the table. However, the reasons for these licence revocations are only recorded from October 2002.

Life licences can be revoked for a specific reason or a combination of reasons. In broad terms, a licensee's recall to custody is likely to occur in two main areas. Firstly, where specific behaviour, criminal or otherwise, is giving rise to concerns over the potential risk of harm to the public. Secondly, where probation staff are unable safely to manage the level of risk as a result of the licensee's non-compliance with licence conditions. Other issues will frequently combine with these main factors, most notably concerns relating to alcohol and drug misuse.

Of the 70 lifers recalled from 1 October 2002 to 31 March 2004, the reasons for recall were listed as:

actual or potential risk of harm to others (17 cases);

breach of licence conditions (20 cases);

either or both of the above factors, linked to other concerns over behaviour (33 cases).

Life sentence prisoner recalls April 2000 to March 2004

Year/month	*Number of recalls*
2000	
April	2
May	1
June	2
July	2
August	4
September	5
October	2
November	3
December	2
2001	
January	6
February	1
March	5
April	0
May	1
June	2
July	5
August	4
September	2
October	3
November	1
December	3
2002	
January	1
February	2
March	2
April	1
May	2
June	3
July	2
August	3
September	2
October	3
November	3
December	2
2003	
January	2
February	3
March	3
April	4
May	4
June	2
July	4
August	3
September	2
October	10
November	6
December	5
2004	
January	6
February	3
March	5

Police Funding

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much police expenditure was met by *(a)* council tax precepts and *(b)* Home Office grants, (i) as a percentage of local police force expenditure and (ii) in cash terms, broken down by police force, in each year since 1997–98. [170375]

Ms Blears: I have placed the information in the Library.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much of the cost of policing in Merseyside was paid for *by (a)* central government and *(b)* local taxes in each of the last eight years. [177847]

Ms Blears: The information is set out in the table.

£ million

	Total gross revenue expenditure	*Government funding and specific grants*[1]	*Other*[2]	*Council tax*
1996–97	225.6	202.9	-0.6	23.3
1997–98	230.2	206.1	-3.2	27.4
1998–99	246.8	213.7	3.8	29.3
1999–2000	254.6	216.1	6.8	31.7
2000–01	269.0	226.3	9.7	33.0
2001–02	285.2	235.9	13.5	35.8
2002–03	293.5	244.4	9.6	39.5
2003–04	309.9	260.0	7.6	42.3

[1] Includes principal Home Office police grant, ODPM Revenue Support grant and National Non Domestic Rates, Special grant, Revenue for Airwave, Crime Fighting Fund, Rural Policing grant, Loan charges grant, Street Crime Initiative grant and other specific grants.

[2] Includes all other force income apart from specific grants from Government and movements in reserves.

Source:

Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Police Statistics (Actuals 1997–98 to 2002–03 and Estimates 2003–04).

Albert Owen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much of the cost of policing in North Wales was paid for from *(a)* central Government funds, *(b)* local council tax and *(c)* other sources in each year since 1996–97. [174068]

Ms Blears: The information is set out in the table.

£ million

	Council tax	Government funding and specific grants[1]	Other[2]	Total gross revenue expenditure
1996–97	10.7	58.7	2.0	71.4
1997–98	11.2	61.1	0.4	72.7
1998–99	13.6	61.6	2.0	77.2
1999–2000	15.7	64.0	1.7	81.4
2000–01	18.8	67.3	3.0	89.1
2001–02	20.0	74.8	3.6	98.4
2002–03	23.6	78.4	3.8	105.8
2003–04	31.3	78.2	3.3	112.8

[1] Includes Principal Home Office Police grant, Revenue Support Grant and National Non Domestic Rates (police general grants), Special Grant, Crime Fighting Fund, Rural Policing Grant, Loan Charge Grant and other specific grants.
Under grant protection arrangements in England, police authorities have been guaranteed a minimum increase a 'floor' in general grant funding each year since 2002–03. Grant 'floors' are not applied by the Welsh Assembly, but to ensure North Wales received a grant increase equivalent to the English minimum of 2.3 per cent. in 2002–03, the Home Secretary made a special payment to North Wales Police Authority of £362,000. North Wales was also supported by this arrangement in 2004–05 (£1.5 million). Its increase in general grants in 2003–04 was 4.5 per cent. well above the funding floor of 3.0 per cent.
[2] Includes all other force income apart from specific grants from Government, and movement in reserves.
Source:
Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Police Statistics (Actuals 1996–97 to 2002–03 and Estimates 2003–04), provided by the Police Authority.

Police Numbers (Greater London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers there were in each police force in Greater London in each year since 1997. [177076]

Ms Blears: The number of police officers in the City of London and the Metropolitan Police Service are given in the table:

Police officer strength full-time equivalent

Strength as at:	City of London	Metropolitan police	Total
31 March 1997	859	26,677	27,536
31 March 1998	825	26,094	26,919
31 March 1999	778	26,073	26,851
31 March 2000	732	25,485	26,217
31 March 2001	703	24,878	25,581
31 March 2002	764	26,223	26,987
31 March 2003[1]	808	27,984	28,792
31 December 2003[1,2]	842	29,441	30,283

[1] Comparable with previous data—excludes staff on career breaks and maternity/paternity leave.
[2] The latest available figures for the end of the year were issued with Home Office Press Release 095/2004 on 2 March 2004.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* Ministry of Defence police officers, *(b)* British Transport police officers, *(c)* National Crime Squad officers and *(d)* police force officers there were in Greater London in each year since 1997. [177099]

Ms Blears: The Home Office does not collect numbers of Ministry of Defence police officers. British Transport police officer numbers were collected for the first time on 31 March 2003. The National Crime Squad was established with effect from 1 April 1998 so data were collected only from 31 March 1999.

Available data are given in the table:

Police strength (FTE) as at:	British Transport Police	National Crime Squad	Metropolitan Police and City of London
31 March 1997	—	—	27,536
31 March 1998	—	—	26,919
31 March 1999	—	1,333	26,851
31 March 2000	—	1,389	26,217
31 March 2001	—	1,308	25,581
31 March 2002	—	1,176	26,987
31 March 2003	2,176	1,175	28,792
30 September 2003	1,939	1,179	29,765

Prison Staff (Retirement)

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received from the Prison Officers' Association regarding the retirement age of prison staff. [173395]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 14 May 2004]:* Retirement ages are currently under general review following the publication of the Green Paper "Simplicity, security and choice: Working and saving for retirement", published in December 2002. The Green Paper considers retirement ages for public servants, including specific groups. It refers to the different considerations applying to:

"... the armed forces, fire service and police where the need for a recognised physical capacity justifies the award of normal pension at a lower age ...".

The Prison Officers' Association (POA) has made representations to be included as an additional special case to the departments with lead responsibility for pensions reforms—the Treasury, Inland Revenue and the Department for Work and Pensions. The POA has also made their views known to the Prison Service on a number of occasions and officials have passed the POA views to the lead Departments.

Prison Service Plus

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what applications have been made to the European Social Fund in relation to resettlement activities in the Prison Service; and if he will make a statement. [166818]

Paul Goggins: From the information available centrally about European Social Fund (ESF) applications, the Prison Service has recently submitted an ESF application to extend Prison Service Plus to a £59 million programme operating until 31 December 2006 in at least 40 establishments (45 per cent. funded by ESF). Prison Service Plus is the largest ESF-funded resettlement programme in the Prison Service. It is currently a £29 million programme operating in 28 establishments until 31 August 2004 (45 per cent. funded

by ESF) and is geared to delivering improved employment and accommodation outcomes for released prisoners.

Prisons (Racial Conflict)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what initiatives his Department has put in place to deal with racial conflict in the prison system. [176556]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 9 June 2004]:* The Prison Service is undertaking a number of initiatives to address racism. In December 2003 a full scale and comprehensive joint action plan to combat all aspects of racism was agreed between the Prison Service and the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE). The plan, entitled "Implementing Race Equality in Prisons—A Shared Agenda for Change", was produced in partnership with the CRE. It brings together work currently being undertaken to ensure compliance with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 through the Prison Service Race Equality Scheme and incorporates lessons learned from the CRE Formal Investigation into race relations.

Publicly Funded Programmes (Crosby)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much public funding has been spent in Crosby from the *(a)* Criminal Justice Interventions Programme, *(b)* Adult Drug Treatment Programme, *(c)* Building Safer Communities Programme, *(d)* Basic Command Unit Fund, *(e)* Wardens Scheme and *(f)* Regional Home Office Directors Fund. [177873]

Ms Blears: A breakdown of financial allocation to individual constituencies is not available. Funding is allocated at local authority level. The following amounts of funding have been allocated in Sefton :

(a) Criminal Justice Interventions Programme (CJIP) to Sefton Drug Action Team (DAT):

2003-04—£35,000

2004-05—£222,235

(b) Adult Drug Treatment Programme to Sefton DAT:

2002-03—£971,000

2003-04—£1,261,712

2004-05—£1,416,095

In order to ensure consistency, the figures supplied are based on funding streams associated with the National Drug Strategy and are readily verifiable. These funding streams are specifically targeted at tackling the harm caused to individuals, families and communities by the misuse of drugs. Other mainstream funding is made available at a local level. This varies both in amount and origin and as a result it is not possible to provide robust financial information.

(c) Building Safer Communities Fund (BSC) to Sefton Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP).

2003-04—£288,024

2004/05—£295,225 + £25,000 for anti-social behaviour co-ordinator costs

(d) Basic Command Unit (BCU) Fund to Sefton BCU.

2003-04—£196,745

2004-05—£196,745

(e) Neighbourhood Wardens Scheme—there are no neighbourhood wardens in Sefton.

(f) A broad, pan-Merseyside investment of £110,000 in 2003-04 and £45,000 in 2004-05 has been made available from the Home Office Regional Directors' allocation to the Multi-Agency Group/Joint Action Group strategic and tactical co-ordination arrangements. No funding has been given direct to Crosby or Sefton but those areas may benefit from the overall allocation.

Antisocial Behaviour

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the recordable offences which he categorises as antisocial behaviour. [177465]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 9 June 2004]:* All offences under provisions which carry the possibility of a custodial sentence are recordable. These are specified in the schedule for the National Police Records Regulations 2000.

The decision as to what constitutes anti-social behaviour is for local communities and those public bodies that serve them. It is for local bodies to look carefully at recorded crime statistics, recordable offences, British Crime Statistics, plus reports from local people in order to understand anti-social behaviour locally.

Section 44 Funding

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the total allocation of section 44 funding in each year since 1997. [174771]

Fiona Mactaggart: I have asked the Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality if he will write to my hon. Friend with this information in due course.

Security Firm Contracts

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what contracts his Department has with the security firm Reliance; whether these are being reviewed; and if he will make a statement. [175545]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 25 May 2004]:* Her Majesty's Prison Service for England and Wales currently contracts with Reliance Security Task Management Ltd. for the delivery of prisoner escort and custody services in the South West of England and South Wales.

A Better Quality Services Review in 2002 recommended that court escort and custody services should remain contracted out but that there should be a re-competition of the current contracts.

The re-competition has been undertaken and contracts are in the process of being awarded and a further contract will be awarded to Reliance.

Sexual Offences

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many incidents of *(a)* drug rape and *(b)* sexual abuse where drugs had been administered were reported in England in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [171023]

Caroline Flint: It is not possible from the information collected centrally on recorded crime to determine the number of offences where drugs had been administered.

Speed Cameras (Errors)

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many fines consequent on speed camera evidence have been rescinded for being erroneous in each year since 1998. [177995]

Caroline Flint: This information is not collected centrally.

Stun Guns

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many stun guns have been seized by the police in 2004. [177800]

Caroline Flint: The requested information is not collected centrally.

Surrey Police

Virginia Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* police officers and *(b)* police support staff there have been in Surrey in each year since 1996. [177271]

Ms Blears: The information requested is given in the table:

Full-time equivalents

Surrey	*Police strength*	*Police staff*[1]
31 March 1996	1,644	792
31 March 1997	1,620	757
31 March 1998	1,608	768
31 March 1999	1,662	754
31 March 2000	1,785	780
31 March 2001[2]	2,066	922
31 March 2002	1,992	1,063
31 March 2003[3]	1,906	[4]1,258
31 December 2003[3]	1,922	n/a

[1] Includes traffic wardens.
[2] The figures for Surrey were affected by the boundary changes in April 2000.
[3] Comparable strength (excludes staff on career breaks and maternity/paternity leave).
[4] Includes 21 Community Support Officers.

Women Prisoners

Mr. Stinchcombe: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many women over the age of 70 years have been remanded to HMP Holloway in the last year; for how long in each case; and for what offences. [177407]

Paul Goggins: Two women over the age of 70 have been remanded to HMP Holloway in the last year, both for the offence of breaching a restraining order. The women spent one night and five nights in custody respectively.

Mr. Stinchcombe: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many suicide attempts have been made by inmates of Holloway Prison in the last year. [177495]

Paul Goggins: In the calendar year 2003, there were 851 recorded acts of self-harm involving prisoners at HMP Holloway.

Suicidal intent is not easy to establish. The reasons why people self-injure are highly complex, and it is difficult to distinguish between acts of self-harm that were attempts at ending life, and those that occurred for other reasons. It is not possible, therefore, for the Prison Service to determine from the general figures recording incidents of self-harm those acts that could be described as attempts at suicide. The figure above therefore includes all acts of self-harm, however serious.

Women prisoners are to benefit from a specifically targeted and separate suicide prevention and self-harm management strategy being developed for them. This builds upon a number of interventions including: individual crisis counselling for women prisoners who self-harm; the continued development and evaluation of Dialectical Behaviour Therapy, which is currently being trialled at Durham, Bullwood Hall and Holloway prisons; investment and planning to ensure progress on the detoxification strategy in women's prisons; and the introduction of a new training pack for all staff working with women in custody, which includes a module on the health and well-being of women prisoners. £1 million from the Department of Health has been allocated to women's prisons to be spent on the recruitment of psychiatric nurses.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many female inmates have committed suicide in England and Wales *(a)* broken down by prison and *(b)* in total in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement; [177508]

(2) how many female suicides in prisons were *(a)* remand prisoners, *(b)* had a substance abuse problem prior to entering jail and *(c)* had been moved from another prison within the previous three months in each of the past three years; [177565]

(3) how many suicides there were in each women's prison in each of the past three years; and if he will make a statement. [177568]

Paul Goggins: The following table shows the number of self-inflicted deaths involving women prisoners in each year since 1997, the establishments in which the deaths occurred, the number of women who were on remand when they died, and the number of women who had moved from another prison in the three months before their deaths.

Number of self-inflicted deaths per calendar year

Establishment	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*[1]
Askham Grange	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Brockhill	—	1	1	2	1	—	1	1
Buckley Hall	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Bullwood Hall	1	—	—	—	1	—	1	—
Cookham Wood	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Downview	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Drake Hall	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Durham	—	—	—	—	—	2	3	1
East Sutton Park	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Eastwood Park	—	—	—	3	1	1	1	—
Edmunds Hill	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Foston Hall	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Highpoint	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Holloway	—	1	2	1	1	1	—	2
Low Newton	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Morton Hall	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
New Hall	—	1	1	1	—	2	3	1
Risley	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Send	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Styal	—	—	—	1	1	2	4	—
Winchester	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
PECS[2] Area 3	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
PECS Area 6	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
Annual Total	3	3	5	8	6	9	14	9
Remand Total[3]	—	1	3	3	4	5		1
Moved from another prison in previous three months[4]	—	1	2	—	—	1	4	3

[1] To 1 June.
[2] Prison Escort and Custody Services. Deaths in PECS custody include those that occur in courts, or during transfer from police custody to court or prison, to or from court, or between prisons.
[3] Annual total includes all remand, convicted/ unsentenced, sentenced and judgment respited categories. The remand total is for those who died while on remand only.
[4] Three months has been defined as 92 days. The definition does not rule out prisoners who may have spent time in their final prison on an earlier occasion.

It is not possible to determine how many of the women who died had a substance misuse issue prior to entering prison, as such data are not collated centrally.

The number of self-inflicted deaths among women prisoners is recognised as a very serious concern by the Prison Service and Ministers. Women prisoners are to benefit from a specifically targeted and separate suicide prevention and self-harm management strategy being developed for them. This builds upon a number of interventions including: individual crisis counselling for women prisoners who self-harm; the continued development and evaluation of dialectical behaviour therapy, which is currently being trialled at Durham, Bullwood Hall and Holloway prisons; investment and planning to ensure progress on the detoxification strategy in women's prisons; and the introduction of a new training pack for all staff working with women in custody, which includes a module on the health and well-being of women prisoners. £1 million from the Department of Health has been allocated to women's prisons to be spent on the recruitment of psychiatric nurses.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisons there were housing women prisoners in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [177509]

Paul Goggins: The number of prisons in England and Wales with female units at any time during the year, in each year since 1997, is given in the table.

Prisons with female units England and Wales

	Number
1997	16
1998	17
1999	17
2000	16
2001	18
2002	19
2003	19

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what assessment he has made of the effect of transferring female prisoners between jails; and if he will make a statement; [177566]

(2) what assessment he has made of the impact on the mental health of women prisoners of the distance of the prison from their families. [177567]

Paul Goggins: There is no specific research on the effects of transferring women between prisons nor on the mental health effects of being located far from home. But we do know from other data that being close to family and friends is particularly important for female prisoners and moving between prisons is bound to be disruptive to any prisoner.

The Prison Service has recently started research with Oxford University Public Health Department on the effects of imprisonment on women's health. The effects of women's locations in relation to their families and the effects of transfers between prisons are expected to be examined as part of that work. It is hoped that the preliminary results will be available by the end of 2005.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Cattle Diseases

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average length of time was that cattle remained on farms before being collected following a positive test for *(a)* brucellosis and *(b)* tuberculosis in 2003. [R] [178388]

Mr. Pearson: The information is as follows:

(a) In 2003, the average length of time that elapsed between a positive brucellosis test and slaughter of the reactor animal was 14 working days.

(b) In 2003, the average length of time that elapsed between a positive tuberculosis test and slaughter of the reactor animal was 21 working days.

GCSEs

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average point score of GCSE pupils in Northern Ireland was in each of the past five years. [177666]

Mr. Gardiner: The average point scores for GCSE pupils in Northern Ireland over the last five years are as follows:

Academic year	*Average point score*
1997–98	35.1
1998–99	36.3
1999–2000	36.9
2000–01	36.
2001–02	37.
2002–03	37.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State fo Northern Ireland whether vocational GCSE grades ar included when calculating the average point scores o pupils in Northern Ireland. [17766

Mr. Gardiner: Vocational GCSE's were introduced i September 2002. The first awards are expected at the en of the 2003–04 academic year. From this point they wi be included in the calculation of average point scores o pupils in Northern Ireland.

Higher Education

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State fo Northern Ireland what percentage of young entrants t higher education in Northern Ireland were from socia classes *(a)* iii, *(b)* iv and *(c)* v since 1995–96. [17824

Mr. Gardiner: The Department for Employment an Learning does not hold information on social class of a students at Northern Ireland higher educatio institutions. However, data are available for Northern Ireland domiciled entrants to higher education i Northern Ireland who applied using the Universitie and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS).

Information for NI domiciled accepted applicants t degree courses at NIHE institutions through UCAS b social class from 1995–96 to 2001–02 is as follows.

Percentag

	Social class					
	I Professional	*II Intermediate*	*III Skilled Non-manual*	*IIIM Manual Skilled*	*IV Partly Skilled*	*Unskille*
1995–96	8	41	15	24	8	
1996–97	8	40	16	25	8	
1997–98	8	42	17	22	8	
1998–99	7	42	17	24	8	
1999–2000	8	41	17	23	8	
2000–01	9	40	18	23	8	
2001–02	8	41	18	23	8	

Notes:
1. Individual figures have been rounded which means that the sum of percentages in each row may not total 100.
2. The last year for which data on social class is available is 2001–02. From 2002–03, UCAS provide a Socio-Economic Classificatio (SEC) of students which is not directly comparable with the social class information.

Source:
UCAS

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what Government spending on student support in Northern Ireland has been as a proportion of gross domestic product in the last 10 years. [178243]

Mr. Gardiner: Student support information on the basis of Resource Allocation Budgets in Northern Ireland is only available in the Department for Employment and Learning from the 2001–02 financial year. Estimates of Gross Value Added (GVA), previously known as gross domestic product, are not yet available for Northern Ireland beyond 2001–02. Currently, therefore, the only year for which the information can be calculated is 2001–02. For that yea Government spending on student support wa £59,263,000 or 0.29 per cent. of GVA.

Hotels

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State fo Northern Ireland what the hotel occupancy rates were i Northern Ireland in each *(a)* year and *(b)* month in th last 20 years. [17884

Mr. Gardiner: The table provided by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board gives the breakdown of annua and monthly percentage room and bedspace occupanc levels for Northern Ireland.

Hotel occupancy[1]

	January	*February*	*March*	*April*	*May*	*June*
						Percentage rate
2004						
Room	46	56	56	—	—	—
Bedspace	28	37	35	—	—	—
2003						
Room	40	51	52	55	60	66
Bedspace	24	32	32	36	39	41
2002						
Room	41	53	51	53	62	63
Bedspace	23	31	32	34	38	41
2001						
Room	41	50	49	49	58	66
Bedspace	22	29	29	31	35	40
2000						
Room	39	46	50	58	62	63
Bedspace	22	28	29	38	38	39
1999						
Room	40	47	47	51	58	63
Bedspace	23	28	30	33	36	41
1998						
Room	43	53	50	53	59	64
Bedspace	24	31	28	32	34	39
1997						
Room	39	51	51	52	53	59
Bedspace	22	31	33	32	34	37
1996						
Room	44	55	56	58	66	67
Bedspace	25	32	34	36	42	44
1995						
Room	46	55	62	60	67	72
Bedspace	27	33	39	42	44	48
1994						
Room	36	48	50	49	54	57
Bedspace	21	27	28	31	34	35
1993						
Room	37	51	49	48	53	62
Bedspace	23	31	31	32	37	40
1992						
Room	34	46	46	46	51	54
Bedspace	21	29	28	32	35	36
1991						
Room	37	42	44	48	56	57
Bedspace	22	27	30	32	38	37
1990						
Room	33	45	53	49	59	62
Bedspace	21	28	34	33	40	40
1989						
Room	37	47	49	53	56	55
Bedspace	23	31	32	34	36	37
1988						
Room	35	44	46	46	45	52
Bedspace	22	26	29	31	32	33
1987						
Room	33	49	46	49	51	52
Bedspace	21	30	29	33	35	35
1986						
Room	31	42	41	42	47	50
Bedspace	19	25	26	27	31	33
1985						
Room	37	42	45	49	51	51
Bedspace	24	27	27	34	36	35
1984						
Room	30	41	42	44	49	51
Bedspace	19	27	28	31	35	35
1983						
Room	29	34	42	41	42	45
Bedspace	19	21	28	29	30	32
1982						
Room	25	30	35	32	38	37
Bedspace	16	19	22	22	26	25
1981						
Room	30	37	38	33	34	34
Bedspace	19	23	24	23	22	22

Hotel occupancy[1]

	January	*February*	*March*	*April*	*May*	*Percentage rate June*
1980						
Room	32	33	34	35	36	41
Bedspace	19	21	23	23	24	27

	July	*August*	*September*	*October*	*November*	*December*	*Year average*
2004							
Room	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bedspace	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2003							
Room	56	66	68	61	56	46	56
Bedspace	40	49	43	39	34	30	37
2002							
Room	54	60	61	56	50	39	53
Bedspace	38	42	38	35	31	25	34
2001							
Room	51	62	62	55	53	41	53
Bedspace	35	44	38	34	31	27	33
2000							
Room	52	59	62	55	50	43	53
Bedspace	36	40	38	33	28	26	33
1999							
Room	54	59	66	59	54	41	53
Bedspace	37	41	41	38	31	25	34
1998							
Room	51	60	61	53	51	38	53
Bedspace	34	41	36	33	29	24	32
1997							
Room	45	59	66	62	56	45	53
Bedspace	30	41	41	37	32	27	33
1996							
Room	52	60	62	56	57	41	56
Bedspace	36	43	39	34	33	26	35
1995							
Room	61	70	75	65	65	45	62
Bedspace	45	53	49	41	38	28	41
1994							
Room	44	54	60	55	55	44	51
Bedspace	31	38	38	33	33	28	31
1993							
Room	47	52	55	50	43	32	48
Bedspace	35	39	37	32	25	21	32
1992							
Room	49	56	56	49	43	34	47
Bedspace	36	43	37	33	28	22	32
1991							
Room	55	59	59	50	47	33	49
Bedspace	40	46	40	33	30	22	33
1990							
Room	50	58	62	53	46	34	50
Bedspace	37	43	42	35	29	23	34
1989							
Room	50	56	59	51	53	34	50
Bedspace	36	40	41	35	33	23	33
1988							
Room	47	48	53	46	47	32	45
Bedspace	35	35	33	30	28	23	30
1987							
Room	46	54	58	53	45	32	47
Bedspace	35	39	39	34	28	21	32
1986							
Room	44	53	51	48	41	30	43
Bedspace	32	40	34	30	25	20	29
1985							
Room	51	54	48	50	42	28	46
Bedspace	37	41	37	38	28	19	32
1984							
Room	44	54	52	49	43	34	44
Bedspace	35	43	38	32	28	24	31

	July	August	September	October	November	December	Year average
1983							
Room	41	47	44	40	40	31	40
Bedspace	31	36	32	28	27	22	28
1982							
Room	33	40	40	39	32	28	34
Bedspace	25	31	26	25	20	19	23
1981							
Room	33	31	36	38	31	26	33
Bedspace	22	26	25	20	17	15	22
1980							
Room	36	40	43	35	34	25	35
Bedspace	25	28	24	22	24	17	23

[1] A new survey methodology was introduced in 1997 therefore caution should be taken when comparing pre-1997 results with post-1997 results.

Hunting Bill

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions he has had with his colleagues in the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs about the extension of the Hunting Bill to Northern Ireland. [175638]

Mr. Pearson: My right hon. Friend the Minister of State for Rural Affairs referred to the issue of the introduction of a Hunting Bill with my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland during an informal conversation in late 2002. There have been no other discussions with the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Lyric Theatre, Belfast

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what financial assistance the Government is providing for the redevelopment of the Lyric Theatre in Belfast. [178476]

Angela Smith: No decision has yet been taken on whether the Government will provide financialassistance for the redevelopment of the Lyric Theatre. This will depend on the strength of the business case and the availability of funding to meet the capital costs. My Department is currently working with the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and The Lyric Theatre to develop a robust and up-to-date business case for support from public sector funds.

Music Teaching

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what risk assessment was carried out when deciding upon a maximum class size of 20 for music classes; by whom this risk assessment was carried out; and what evidence there is to support the limiting of class sizes to 20 pupils. [178539]

Mr. Gardiner: The maximum class size of 20 for pupils in practical music classes was initially included in the Department's 2001 Circular on Class Sizes in Practical Subjects. More recently the Department reassessed the position by consulting with various educational specialists/organisations including the Department's Education and Training Inspectorate, representatives of heads of post-primary schools, school authorities and teacher unions.

The professional view emerging from this consultation again confirmed that in general, health and safety hazards are such that adequate and safe supervision of pupils is not possible if more than 20 pupils are present in a class and involved in practical activities. This limit only applies to music classes involving the practical use of musical instruments. Also, the limit does not apply to choirs or orchestras, which are not classified as classes for the purposes of the Department's circular.

Should issues arise for specific schools with regard to meeting the maximum class size requirement of 20 pupils for music, schools can seek advice from the Department on an appropriate way forward.

National Stadium

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the outcome was of the recent feasibility study into a National Stadium for Northern Ireland; whether a potential developer has been identified; and if he will make a statement. [178519]

Angela Smith: I made an announcement on 24 May 2004 on the outcome of the recent business plan exercise in relation to the concept of a Northern Ireland multi-sports stadium. This was to the effect that such a venture could be operationally viable provided the sports of Soccer, Rugby and Gaelic Games were engaged. No potential developer has been identified as it would be premature to seek to do so prior to the completion of a proper examination of site options and a formal commitment from the three sports concerned to a multi-sports stadium. I have arranged for a copy of my statement on this matter to be sent to the hon. Lady. A copy will also be placed in the Library

Northern Ireland Assembly

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the sums paid to Assembly Members in *(a)* salaries and *(b)* office and staff allowances since the Northern Ireland Assembly elections in November 2003. [176958]

Mr. Paul Murphy: Following my determination under Section 47 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 in respect of Members' salaries and allowances effective from 5 December 2003, a total of £1.377 million has been paid in respect of Members' salaries with a farther £1.518 million paid in respect of office costs and other

allowances, including Members' travel and subsistence. These figures include payments made up to 31 March 2004.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the costs of the Northern Ireland Assembly since its suspension in October 2002. [176970]

Mr. Paul Murphy: Since its suspension on 14 October 2002, the cost associated with maintaining the Assembly up to 31 March 2004 is £36.6 million. This figure comprises costs relating to Members and parties of £15.4 million; property, accommodation and business services £7.5 million; and salaries of the Assembly Secretariat of £13.7 million. An element of this latter figure is attributable to Assembly staff who have been working on non Assembly projects within the wider public sector in Northern Ireland since June 2003.

Osteoporosis

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken by the Department for Health in Northern Ireland to tackle osteoporosis in females. [178610]

Mr. Pearson: The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety is promoting action to prevent osteoporosis through a range of strategies and action plans designed to encourage regular exercise, a balanced diet, smoking prevention/cessation, home accident prevention and a responsible approach to alcohol consumption.

In addition to lifestyle changes, there are a number of interventions, including medicines, used to prevent and treat osteoporosis. The choice of intervention is a matter for clinical judgment, having taken account of the evidence of effectiveness, clinical circumstances and the views expressed by the individual patient.

Policing Board for Northern Ireland

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the outcome was of the recruitment competitions for the post of Communications Director for the Policing Board for Northern Ireland commenced in *(a)* July 2003 and *(b)* January 2004. [177671]

Mr. Pearson: I am advised by the Policing Board that there was no appointment made from the July 2003 Communications Director competition because none of the candidates interviewed were deemed suitable for the post. Therefore the post was re-advertised in January 2004. An offer has been made to a candidate and the Policing Board is awaiting a formal acceptance.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what account the Policing Board for Northern Ireland has taken of the Fair Employment Tribunal decision in the case of Willis *v.* Police Authority for Northern Ireland and others with regard to *(a)* the necessity of short-listing, *(b)* interview panels' notes to record assessments of candidates and decisions in relation to the short-listing and interviewing process and *(c)* the requirement to retain all application forms and related documents for 12 months; [177672]

(2) for what reason the panel of the Policing Board for Northern Ireland decided not to record their individual assessments and selections in short-listing applicants for the post of Communications Director in July 2003; [177673]

(3) for what reason the Policing Board for Northern Ireland decided not to retain documentation relating to the recruitment competition for the post of Communications Director commenced in July 2003. [177674]

Mr. Pearson: I have been advised by the Policing Board that these are issues that have been raised in an application to the Fair Employment Tribunal in Northern Ireland by a candidate who was an unsuccessful applicant for the July 2003 competition for the post of Communications Director. As there are on-going proceedings, it would be inappropriate for me to comment further.

Public Bodies

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether a code of conduct has been published in respect of members of the Implementation Body on Language. [176891]

Angela Smith: The North South Ministerial Council at a meeting on 14 June 2002 approved the code of conduct for Board members of the North South Language Body. The code of conduct has not been published.

Salmon

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made regarding the buy-out of salmon nets in Northern Ireland's river estuaries. [178622]

Angela Smith: The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure has spent just over £1.1 million on the buy-out of 27 owners of commercial salmon nets with the potential to operate 49 commercial salmon nets in the Fisheries Conservancy Board (FCB) area. This represents an 87.5 per cent. reduction in the potential number of commercial nets available to fish in the FCB area. The 10-year average number of salmon taken by these nets was 9,800 out of a 10-year average declared commercial catch of between 10,000–11,000 salmon.

Smoking

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what *(a)* discussions he has had with and *(b)* advice he has received from the Chief Medical Officer in relation to the possible introduction of a ban on smoking in public places in Northern Ireland. [178702]

Mr. Pearson: The Chief Medical Officer and I have had a number of wide-ranging discussions about tobacco control, including a possible ban on smoking in public places in Northern Ireland. We agreed that it was important for us to contribute to the wider UK debate on possible smoking prohibitions/restrictions by assessing the level of public support here. We also agreed that officials should consider the implications of a ban, including those relating to enforcement.

As Dr. Campbell made clear in her recent interview with the *Belfast Telegraph*, while she favours a ban, this would not, of itself, address the appalling toll of premature death and avoidable illness caused by smoking. The ongoing inter-agency work to implement the Tobacco Action Plan is of paramount importance in pursuing our long-term aim of a tobacco-free society.

Students (Appeals)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on future arrangements for students to appeal against decisions made by further education colleges which are currently dealt with by the Education Department. [177738]

Mr. Gardiner: Colleges have formal procedures for dealing with complaints that involve the Principal, the Board of Governors and ultimately referral to the Department for Employment and Learning. The Department has the power to give direction to remedy the complaint. These arrangements, however, are being reviewed in partnership with the Association of Northern Ireland Colleges, the Trade Unions and the Department.

Variable Fees

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will publish the advice provided by the Northern Ireland Higher Education Council to him on the proposal to introduce variable fees in Northern Ireland. [177737]

Mr. Gardiner: The Northern Ireland Higher Education Council (NIHEC) is an advisory body to the Department for Employment and Learning on higher education matters.

The Council has provided advice on a number of key issues including the implications for Northern Ireland of proposals to increase funding of higher education through the introduction of variable deferred fees.

NIHEC advice is provided to the Department on a confidential basis.

Vehicle Tax

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to assist motorists and hauliers whose MOT and PSV tests have been postponed as a result of industrial action by civil servants and who are unable to tax their vehicles. [178856]

Angela Smith: The Driver and Vehicle Testing Agency (DVTA), which is responsible for vehicle testing, has taken a range of measures to alleviate the impact of industrial action. These include contacting customers directly affected and, where possible, offering alternative appointments; maximising the use of the capacity available at other test centres; redeploying staff from non-urgent duties; and cancelling non-essential training.

DVTA has also introduced temporary exemption certificates for goods vehicles, to mitigate the difficulties for the commercial sector. A temporary exemption certificate allows a vehicle to be used on the road without a goods vehicle test certificate for up to three months from the date of issue. It does not alter the responsibility of the owner or operator to maintain the vehicle in a roadworthy condition. The use of temporary exemption certificates has freed up capacity for the testing of vehicles in priority categories such as ambulances and public service vehicles.

DVTA has also been keeping in contact with the Police Service for Northern Ireland (PSNI) and the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Northern Ireland (DVLNI) regarding the implications for motorists. The law is very clear: technically it is an offence to drive a vehicle without a valid MOT certificate, and it is an offence to use or keep an unlicensed vehicle on a public road. However, PSNI and DVLNI are aware of the difficulties and have advised that for the moment each case will be considered on its merits. They have also indicated that all relevant circumstances will be taken into account before anyone is prosecuted. The agency has also been in touch with the Association of British Insurers, who have indicated that in most cases motorists affected by industrial action will continue to be covered by their insurance policies. However, they have also advised those affected to check the detail of their policies and also to make direct contact with their insurers.

Longer term measures under active consideration include temporary exemption certificates for cars and making alternative arrangements for vehicle testing.

Young Offenders

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* boys and *(b)* girls up to the age of 16 years are detained in young offenders' institutes in Northern Ireland. [178684]

Mr. Pearson: At present there are two boys aged 16-years-old detained at Hydebank Wood Young Offenders Centre in Northern Ireland. There are currently no females up to the age of 16 detained in young offenders institutions in Northern Ireland.

HEALTH

Carers

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the number of carers of working age who gave up jobs to care for a sick or disabled relative in each of the last five years. [178199]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government have made no estimate of the number of carers of working age who have given up work to provide care.

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* Scotland are carers; and what the estimated cost of paid carers being substituted for the care they provide would be. [178596]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of people providing unpaid care in England as recorded in the 2001 Census

is 4.9 million. The Government have made no estimate of the cost of paid carers being substituted for the care they provide.

Matters relating to Scotland and Wales are matters for the devolved administration. While the institutions in Northern Ireland are dissolved, responsibility rests with the Northern Ireland Office.

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of carers in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* Scotland have access to respite care. [178599]

Dr. Ladyman: The information on the proportion of carers in England that have access to short breaks is not held centrally. Local authority data showed that the 2002–03 Carers' Grant provided 2,140,632 breaks for 143,231 carers, with 31,082 carers benefiting from the services provided directly to them.

Matters relating to Scotland and Wales are matters for the Devolved Administration. While the institutions in Northern Ireland are dissolved, responsibility rests with the Northern Ireland Office.

Fast Food Outlets

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment has been made of the capacity of local authority environmental health departments to police adequately fast food restaurants and other food outlets; and if he will make a statement. [178256]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There has been no recent assessment of the capacity of local authority environmental health departments to police fast food restaurants and other food outlets. Local authorities receive funding through the Revenue Support Grant, to enable them to undertake inspections to the full range of food premises. It is for each local authority to decide specific resource allocations to ensure that it has the capacity to undertake this work.

The Food Standards Agency monitors and audits the food law enforcement work of local authorities. This enables assessments to be made of individual local authority food law enforcement systems and activities, including whether food businesses are inspected in accordance with risk as required under statutory codes of practice.

Alzheimer's Disease

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the provision of *(a)* nursing and *(b)* personal care for people with Alzheimer's disease, with particular reference to funding. [176768]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* Everyone, including those with Alzheimer's, should receive care based on an assessment of their long term care needs. Where they have a primary need for health care, all their care will be provided and funded by the national health service. Where they have a need for care from a registered nurse this will also be funded by the NHS. Where the assessment shows that their care needs do not currently meet the criteria for fully funded NHS care or care from a registered nurse, personal care can be provided by social services on a means tested basis.

Autistic Spectrum Disorder

Mrs. Browning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment his Department has made of the appropriate qualifications and experience required of psychiatrists treating *(a)* in-patients and *(b)* out-patients who have an autistic spectrum disorder. [178955]

Dr. Ladyman: None. This is a professional matter. It is the responsibility of the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

Mrs. Browning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment his Department has made of the number of people with Asperger's syndrome who are misdiagnosed as schizophrenic. [178957]

Dr. Ladyman: None. Where people have Asperger's syndrome or any other form of autistic spectrum disorder, it is important to distinguish behaviours due to their autism from any that might be attributable to a mental health problem in order to ensure that anti-psychotic drugs are prescribed only where they are appropriate.

Clinical Waste (Incineration)

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS hospitals in the Greater London area are able to incinerate their own clinical waste. [177823]

Mr. Hutton: The disposal of clinical waste can only be undertaken at facilities licensed by the Environment Agency. There are no national health service trusts in greater London area that are licensed to operate such facilities and each therefore contracts with the private sector to dispose of this waste.

Coldeast Hospital Site, Fareham

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the status is of the housing development for which planning permission has been granted to a private sector developer on the Coldeast Hospital Site, Fareham. [176695]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* The ownership of the Coldeast Hospital site is split between the Secretary of State for Health, Fareham and Gosport Primary Care Trust (PCT) and Hampshire Partnership National Health Service Trust.

Reserved matters planning consent has recently been granted for a total of 253 housing units on those parts of the site owned by the Secretary of State for Health and Fareham and Gosport PCT. The planning consent was not granted to a private sector developer.

As part of a larger portfolio, an agreement in principle has been reached to transfer the land in the

ownership of the Secretary of State for Health to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). Discussions are continuing on the details of the transfer of the portfolio but once it takes place it will be for ODPM to move forward with the redevelopment of this part of the site.

Fareham and Gosport PCT is firming up its plans for the health service needs of both Fareham and Gosport residents, and the health campus on the Coldeast site is a key part of those plans.

Complementary and Alternative Medicine Council

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the estimated cost of registration with the new Complementary and Alternative Medicine Council will be. [175937]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* On 2 March the Department published proposals for the statutory regulation of herbal medicine and acupuncture practitioners. The consultation period closed on 7 June. I am aware that the cost of statutory regulation is of interest to practitioners and I will carefully consider the comments about costs made in response to the consultation exercise. At this stage we are unable to provide a more accurate estimate of cost than that set out in paragraph 25 of the Department's consultation document, "Regulation of herbal medicine and acupuncture".

Contaminated Blood Products

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many compensation payments have been made, and of what total value, to sufferers of hepatitis C as a result of infection by NHS supplied contaminated blood products. [176223]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The National Blood Authority has made payments of £2,608,075 in respect of 107 cases. These payments have been made following Mr. Justice Burton's judgment of 26 March 2001 under the Consumer Protection Act 1987 in respect of patients infected with hepatitis C through blood transfusions between March 1988 and September 1991.

The NHS Litigation Authority has made payments of £727,027 in respect of 14 cases brought against national health service trusts and health authorities.

Dentistry

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 17 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 797W, on dentistry, if he will place a copy of the full report, or of its recommendations and conclusions, in the Library. [177806]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We plan to publish the report shortly.

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people are registered with NHS dentists in Shrewsbury and Atcham. [177681]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of people registered with a national health service dentist as at 31 March 2004 in the Shropshire County Primary Care Trust area, which covers the Shrewsbury and Atcham constituency, is shown in the table.

Registrations	*Numbers registered at 31 March 2004*
Adults	69,550
Children	38,991
Total	108,541

Disability Equipment

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many items of disability equipment issued by the NHS or social services went missing in the last year for which figures are available. [178349]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not collected centrally. However, as part of the integration and modernisation of community equipment services over the past three years, services have been encouraged to improve systems for tracking equipment issued so that it can be recovered when economical to do so, with a view to decontamination and re-issue.

In addition, the national health service counter fraud and security management service (CFSMS) has set out in its strategy document, "A professional approach to managing security in the NHS", that the security of property and assets is one of its four priority areas. Currently, the CFSMS is working with the Home Office on a Treasury-funded safer hospitals project to look at how technology can be used to better protect staff, professionals and property.

Dr. Jonathan Lampard

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was paid by the NHS to Dr. Jonathan Lampard to set up his NHS dentistry service. [177679]

Dr. Ladyman: Jonathan Lampard received a grant of £45,000 to help establish his new practice in Shrewsbury in 1998.

The grant was provided under the Investing in Dentistry scheme through Section 56 of the National Health Service Act 1977 and approved by the Secretary of State. The conditions agreed by Mr. Lampard included the registration of at least 2,000 patients within one year of opening the practice, the addition of 200 patients during the second year and maintaining that level for a further year. The agreement remained valid for a period of three years from the date of the first registrations (26 March 1998) after which time Mr. Lampard was free of all commitment to the NHS under the agreement.

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on how NHS terms and conditions allowed Dr. Jonathan Lampard, a dentist in Shrewsbury, to leave the NHS. [177680]

Dr. Ladyman: Under current arrangements, dentists working in the general dental services (GDS) are self employed independent contractors providing dental services. Dentists can practice wherever they like. There

are no restrictions and, provided they meet the conditions of suitability, they have an automatic right to provide GDS. They can accept as many or as few national health service patients as they wish and can alter that commitment at will without reference to the primary care trust (PCT). If a dentist working in the GDS wishes to terminate a patient's NHS registration, he/she must give three months notice of his/her intention to the patient. Dentists can quite legally accept only certain categories of patients, for example, children and exempt adults. There is no requirement to give any notice to the PCT about changes in practice acceptance arrangements or of termination of registrations.

Under proposals in the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003, PCTs will be given new responsibility to secure dental services and will be able to provide assistance and support to dental practices with which they contract. With this responsibility will go the resources, totalling some £1.4 billion for 2004–05, held centrally for dentistry to support them in delivering their new duties on dentistry.

The shadow special health authority we set up last August for dentistry is aiming to issue in July indicative contract values to dentists and PCTs to enable them to begin discussions about contracts under the new arrangements. PCTs will be able to agree an increase in a dentist's contract value in return for increased commitment.

E-administration

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when *(a)* electronic transmission of prescriptions and *(b)* e-booking will commence within the health service. [176864]

Mr. Hutton: The electronic transmission of prescriptions in England is scheduled to be implemented from the beginning of 2005. E-booking is being introduced from summer 2004, initially at a small number of sites, but will then be rolled out across the national health service in England with the aim of full coverage by the end of 2005.

Elderly Care Services

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps are being taken to reassess performance indicators for services for older people. [175921]

Dr. Ladyman: The independent Commission for Healthcare Audit and Inspection is responsible for developing a performance assessment system for use in the national health service, including health services for older people. They are considering how to develop the current performance assessment system for the future.

The Commission for Social Care Inspection is responsible for devising criteria to be used for the basis of assessing the performance of local authority social services and awarding them a star rating, and for developing performance indicators as part of those criteria.

Fertility Treatment

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment he has made of the available capacity in England to implement the National Institute for Clinical Excellence's clinical guideline on the assessment and treatment of people with fertility problems; and if he will publish the full results of this assessment; [177215]

(2) what account was taken of national health service capacity during the development of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence's clinical guideline on the assessment and treatment of people with fertility problems; and with whose advice; [177216]

(3) what steps he is taking to ensure that there is adequate capacity available to the NHS to implement in full the National Institute for Clinical Excellence's clinical guideline on the assessment and treatment of people with fertility problems. [177217]

Miss Melanie Johnson: National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidelines, such as those for fertility services, are based on assessments of clinical and cost-effectiveness rather than national health service capacity. We recognise, as does NICE, that the NHS cannot reasonably be expected to implement the fertility guideline overnight, but primary care trusts (PCTs) will need to consider the detail of the guideline and review their services. We have advised all PCTs to offer, by April 2005, a minimum of one cycle in vitro fertilisation (IVF) to those who meet the clinical criteria, and to give priority to couples with no children living with them. We expect the NHS, overall funding for which is increasing from £56 billion to over £90 billion between 2003–04 and 2007–08, to make progress to full implementation in the longer term, including progress towards the maximum of three cycles of IVF which the guideline recommends.

Foundation Trusts

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much is planned to be spent by the first wave NHS foundation trusts on new corporate governance arrangements, including elections and support for boards of governors; and if he will make a statement. [178251]

Mr. Hutton: The cost of the governance arrangements is a matter for each national health service foundation trust. These costs will not be entirely additional as they will replicate some current activity that trusts are already doing around informing the public, patients and staff about issues affecting each trust.

Hospital Building Projects

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many new NHS hospital building projects are under way in England and Wales. [177819]

Mr. Hutton: Currently in England there are 117 hospital schemes counting towards the NHS Plan target of 100 new hospital schemes by 2010. 107 will be built under the private finance initiative (PFI). Of the 107, 38 are now operational and a further 22 are under construction. Of the 10 publicly procured schemes, six are now operational and four are under construction.

Since devolution to the National Assembly of Wales, no information is held centrally on the hospital building programme in Wales.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* planned and *(b)* actual dates for each stage of new hospital projects approved by the Department were; when each scheme started on site; and when they reached financial close. [171590]

Mr. Hutton: The tables show planned and actual dates for the key stages of new hospital projects prioritised by the Department. All schemes are set indicative timetables as part of good project management. Planned financial close dates are given for schemes yet to reach financial close and these are subject to change. They are regularly reviewed and adjusted accordingly; full records of these changes are not held centrally.

Detailed information on new hospital projects that have not been prioritised by the Department (generally below £20 million) is not held centrally.

Schemes which are operational

Trust	Approval of outline business case	Publication of advert in Official Journal of EU	Date of financial close	Operational
North Cumbria Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	January 1994	January 1996	November 1997	April 2000
Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust	March 1995	September 1995	July 1997	September 2000
South Buckinghamshire NHS Trust	September 1994	January 1995	December 1997	October 2000
Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Trust	April 1995	March 1995	July 1998	February 2001
North Durham Health Care NHS Trust	January 1994	December 1994	March 1998	April 2001
Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Trust	December 1994	July 1995	July 1998	April 2001
South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	March 1994	April 1995	June 1998	July 2001
Norfolk and Norwich NHS Trust	January 1995	February 1995	January 1998	September 2001
Hereford Hospitals NHS Trust	January 1995	June 1995	March 1999	March 2002
Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust	December 1995	February 1995	February 1999	March 2002
Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	June 1995	July 1995	March 1999	March 2002
South Durham Healthcare NHS Trust	January 1994	December 1994	May 1999	June 2002
King's Healthcare NHS Trust	July 1995	September 1995	December 1999	October 2002
Swindon and Marlborough NHS Trust	December 1993	October 1999	October 1999	December 2002
Leeds Community and Mental Health services Teaching NHS Trust	January 1996	October 1996	March 2000	December 2002
Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust	November 2002	November 2002	December 2000	March 2003
Bromley Healthcare NHS Trust	March 1995	September 1995	November 1998	March 2003
Berkshire Healthcare NHS Trust	October 1997	December 1998	May 2001	April 2003
West Middlesex University Hospitals NHS Trust	August 1999	September 1998	January 2001	May 2003
South Tees Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	October 1994	March 1995	August 1999	August 2003
St. George's Hospital NHS Trust	June 1995	March 1996	March 2000	September 203

Schemes which have reached financial close with planned operational date.

Trust	Approval of outline business case	Publication of advert in Official Journal of EU	Date of financial close	Planned operational
Gloucestershire Royal NHS Trust	April 1998	April 2000	May 2002	November 2004
Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust	November 1996	September 1998	May 2001	December 2004
University College London Hospitals NHS Trust	March 1995	October 1995	July 2000	April 2005
East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust	May 2000	May 2000	July 2003	July 2005
North West London Hospitals NHS Trust	December 2001	May 2002	November 2003	September 2005
Avon and Western Wiltshire Mental Health NHS Trust	January 2002	February 2002	March 2004	March 2006
University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust	July 2000	August 2000	November 2002	May 2006
Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS Trust	March 2000	August 2001	January 2004	November 2006
Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust	June 2001	July 2001	December 2003	May 2007
Southern Derbyshire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	June 2000	June 2000	September 2003	May 2008

Schemes yet to reach financial close. Operational dates yet to be finalised

Trust	Approval of outline business case	Publication of advert in Official Journal of EU	Planned financial close[1,2]
Brighton Health Care NHS Trust	February 2002	July 2002	2nd Quarter 2004
Lewisham Hospital NHS Trust	June 2002	June 2002	2nd Quarter 2004
Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust	December 2000	Aug 2001	3rd Quarter 2004
Central Manchester Healthcare/Manchester Childrens Hospitals NHS Trust	May 2000	June 2001	2nd Quarter 2004
Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals/Newcastle City Health NHS Trusts	June 2001	July 2001	4th Quarter 2004
Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	September 2001	October 2001	2nd Quarter 2004
Mid Essex Hospitals NHS Trust	June 2002	November 2002	4th Quarter 2004
Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust	August 2002	October 2002	4th Quarter 2004
North Staffordshire Hospital NHS Trusts	August 2002	August 2002	4th Quarter 2004
Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust	November 2002	December 2002	4th Quarter 2004
North Middlesex Hospitals NHS Trust	August 2002	December 2002	4th Quarter 2004
University Hospital Birmingham/South Birmingham Mental Health NHS Trusts	March 2002	April 2002	1st Quarter 2005
Pinderfield and Pontefract Hospitals/Wakefield and Pontefract Community NHS Trust	November 2002	November 2002	1st Quarter 2005
St. Helens and Knowsley Hospitals NHS Trust	November 2002	November 2002	1st Quarter 2005

Schemes yet to reach financial close. Operational dates yet to be finalised

Trust	Approval of outline business case	Publication of advert in Official Journal of EU	Planned financial close[1,2]
Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust	May 2003	May 2003	2nd Quarter 2005
Barts and The London NHS Trust	Feb 2002	Feb 2002	2nd Quarter 2005
Salford Royal Hospitals NHS Trust	March 2003	May 2003	2nd Quarter 2005
Essex Rivers Healthcare NHS Trust	November 2003	November 2003	3rd Quarter 2005
Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust	November 2003	November 2003	3rd Quarter 2005
Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust	May 2003	May 2003	3rd Quarter 2005
Peterborough Hospitals NHS Trust	March 2003	September 2003	4th Quarter 2005
University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust	November 2002	December 2002	4th Quarter 2005

Notes:
1 Full business case approval, financial close and start on site are, generally, co-terminous.
2 By calendar year quarters.

Schemes yet to publish an advert in Official Journal of EU.

Whipps Cross University Hospital

Walsall Hospitals/Walsall Community Health NHS Trusts

Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals NHS Trust

Barnet & Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust

Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust

South Devon Healthcare NHS Trust

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells/Invicta Community Care NHS Trusts

Paddington Basin

Bradford Hospitals NHS Trust

United Bristol Healthcare NHS Trust

Schemes under review

East Kent Hospitals NHS Trust

Locum Staff

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate the average cost of *(a)* a locum doctor and *(b)* an agency nurse for one day. [178478]

Mr. Hutton: This information is not held centrally. Although the Department collects data on overall expenditure on non-national health service staff by NHS trusts and primary care trusts, it does not collect separate information on the numbers of days worked by temporary staff, or on expenditure on agency staff.

Drug Addiction

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the estimated number of drug addicts was at the latest date for which figures are available. [174497]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Coventry, South (Mr. Jim Cunningham), on 10 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 545–47W.

National Blood Authority

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of the 5,560 staff reported in the Department of Health Report 2004 as employed by the National Blood Authority are in administrative or managerial posts. [175689]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The National Blood Service (NBS) currently employs 5,378 (whole-time equivalent) staff. The approximate breakdown of staff within the NBS is as follows:

34 per cent.—professionally qualified clinical staff;

This includes all doctors, qualified nurses, qualified scientific and technical staff.

55 per cent.—support to clinical staff;

This includes staff working in direct support of clinical staff, often with direct donor care. These staff have a direct impact on the NBS' ability to supply blood and patient services to hospitals;

approximately 10 per cent.—central functions such as human resources, finance and information technology, property and estates, and managers; and

approximately one per cent.—senior managers with overall responsibility for budgets, manpower or assets, or accountable for a significant area of work.

National Service Framework (Long-term Conditions)

Mrs. Betty Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he intends to publish the National Service Framework for Long Term Conditions; and what input he has received from *(a)* the National Assembly for Wales and *(b)* other Welsh organisations in developing the framework for the benefit of those people in Wales who receive neurological services from centres in England. [178095]

Dr. Ladyman: The external reference group which we established to support development of the national service framework for long term conditions submitted its advice to the Department last month. We are committed to publishing the framework as soon as possible but we need to consider the economic and practical implications of the advice before publishing the framework and will therefore keep the publication and implementation timetable of the framework under review.

The framework will focus on improving services for people with neurological conditions and addressing some of the common issues that can promote independence for people with other long term conditions. It will apply to services across England and the people that receive treatment, care and support at these services.

Officials from the National Assembly for Wales were involved in the early scoping of the framework and there have been follow up bilateral discussions with departmental officials during its development.

The National Assembly for Wales is also conducting a strategic review of neuroscience services in Wales, which will consider equity of service provision for people in Wales who are receiving services in England and those receiving services in Wales.

NHS Continuing Care (Recompense)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 157W, on continuing NHS care, how many people were granted recompense for being wrongly denied fully funded national health service continuing care; and what the aggregate cost of that recompense was. [177789]

Dr. Ladyman: Information on the number of people who were wrongly denied fully funded national health service continuing care and the overall cost of recompense will be published once the data has been validated.

Obesity

Mr. Flight: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much money has been *(a)* allocated and *(b)* spent for anti-obesity advertising in every year since 1997. [174157]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 19 May 2004]:* There has been no expenditure by the Department of Health specifically on anti-obesity advertising during this period.

The Government lead a range of programmes aimed at improving nutrition and promoting physical activity that will help fight obesity. Spending on Department of Health-led programmes aimed at improving children's diets was £140.98 million in 2002–03, including the national school fruit scheme (with funding from the New Opportunities Fund (NOF)), food in schools (in conjunction with the Department for Education and Skills), welfare foods and support for breastfeeding; plus funding not specific to children of £9.83 million, including five-a-day community initiatives (from NOF), Food Standards Agency activities and grants to charities.

Spending on Department of Health-led programmes to increase physical activity includes £1 billion by 2006 to transform physical education and school sport, £3 million over the next three years to create a team of regional cycling co-ordinators, £10 million for Sporting Playgrounds programme, £32 million on improving, and creating new playing fields (from the Sports Lottery Fund), £115 million to expand the numbers of sports colleges, £108 million in innovative sport and exercise facilities (from Sport England and NOF), and £2.6 million for 10 local exercise action pilots (Sport England and the Countryside Agency)

In addition, local nutrition and activity initiatives are funded through health action zones, sure start, healthy living centres and through general funding allocations to health authorities and primary care trusts, on which information is not collected centrally.

Orthopaedics

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the success rates of orthopaedic procedures undertaken by overseas surgeons on short-term contracts. [174474]

Mr. Hutton: All contracts for orthopaedic procedures, including those involving overseas surgeons, are subject to review including audit of clinical outcomes by the employing trusts. All contracts are subject to local clinical governance policies which will include the audit of surgical procedures. Information on clinical outcome will be held locally.

Plutonium

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the studies on plutonium and teeth to which reference is made in the reply to the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker) of 4 November 2003, *Official Report*, columns 597–98; and whether further work has been funded by his Department on that matter since this date. [178722]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The study referred to was published as a scientific paper entitled, "Variations in the Concentration of Plutonium, Strontium-90 and Total Alpha-emitters in Human Teeth Collected Within the British Isles", R. G. O'Donnell et al. Science of the Total Environment, 201 (1997) 235–243.

The Department has not funded further studies specifically aimed at measurement of radioactivity in children's teeth. Since 1985, the Department has funded a programme of research in the field of radiological protection and the study by O'Donnell et al was funded from this programme.

Registered Doctors

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate his Department has made of the number of doctors *(a)* from the UK, *(b)* from the European Economic Area, *(c)* from overseas and *(d)* in total who have registered in the UK in the last year. [178263]

Mr. Hutton: The General Medical Council is the independent regulatory body responsible for registering doctors in the United Kingdom. Figures held by it are collated annually. The table shows the number of doctors whose primary medical qualification was obtained in the area specified.

2003

	Number of doctors
UK	4,732
European Economic Area	2,129
Overseas	12,282
Total	19,143

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many doctors from overseas took the Professional and Linguistic Assessment Board test in order to register to practise in the UK in the last 12 months. [178267]

Mr. Hutton: The General Medical Council is responsible for administering the Professional and Linguistic Assessment Board (PLAB) test for overseas doctors, and collates figures annually. The table shows the figures for 2003.

PLAB 2003

	Part One	*Part Two*
Attempted	12,513	6,580
Passed	7,711	5,207
Percentage pass rate	62	79

Serotonin

Ann Clwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will list the drug manufacturers which have submitted studies to the comprehensive review of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors being undertaken by the Medicines and Healthcare Regulations Agency; and how many of the studies each manufacturer submitted are *(a)* published and *(b)* unpublished; [176934]

(2) how many *(a)* published studies and *(b)* unpublished studies have been submitted by drug manufacturers to the comprehensive review of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors being undertaken by the Medicines and Healthcare Regulations Agency; [176935]

(3) which *(a)* drugs and *(b)* drug manufacturers are the subject of the comprehensive review of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors being undertaken by the Medicines and Healthcare Regulations Agency; [176936]

(4) when the comprehensive review of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors being undertaken by the Medicines and Healthcare Regulations Agency will be published. [176940]

Dr. Ladyman: GlaxoSmithKline, Eli Lilly and Co Ltd., Solvay Healthcare Ltd., Wyeth Pharmaceuticals, Organon Laboratories Ltd., Lundbeck Ltd. and Pfizer Ltd. have submitted information to the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) for review by the committee on safety of medicines' expert working group on selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs).

The information submitted is in the form of study reports, analyses of studies and data from spontaneous reporting schemes. The following table provides the drug substance names and the number of placebo-controlled studies represented in the submissions on use in children and adolescents for each drug substance.

Drug substance (product)	*Number of placebo-controlled studies submitted (paediatric use, any indication)*
Paroxetine (Seroxat)	6
Fluoxetine (Prozac)	4
Fluvoxamine (Faverin)	2
Venlafaxine (Efexor)	4
Mirtazapine (Zispin)	2
Citalopram (Cipramil)	2
Escitalopram (Cipralex)	0
Sertraline (Lustral)	3

The expert working group has completed its review of SSRIs in the treatment of major depressive disorder in children and adolescents and has published previously unpublished summaries of the trials on which its advice was based. The review of SSRIs in adults is on-going and further data are expected for most substances. To date the MHRA has received reports of 214 studies conducted in adult patients and 94 studies conducted in healthy volunteers involving paroxetine. It is not possible to identify from the data submitted which of the studies have been published in the scientific literature.

The expert working group expects to publish its report later this year.

Smoking Cessation

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the validity of the four-week follow-up in determining the success of smoking cessation programmes. [176102]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 27 May 2004]:* We considered whether to monitor the success of clients using the national health service stop smoking services at longer intervals than four weeks, such as six months and one year, but decided that this would present practical difficulties for the stop smoking services, after a trial of monitoring at 52 weeks which produced high lost-to-follow up rates.

We have research in place to evaluate how the services have performed in practice, the final results of which will be available later in the year. The preliminary findings of this work led the research team to estimate that around a quarter of those successfully quit after four weeks will still be abstinent after a year. These results are consistent with those of clinical trials used to guide the setting up of the services.

Waiting Lists/Times

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* mean and *(b)* median waiting times for inpatients were in the NHS for each year from 1991 to 2003. [178886]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 14 June 2004]:* The table shows estimates of the mean and median waiting times for inpatients from 1991 to 2003.

Estimated average time patients on the list had been waiting for elective admission England: (commissioner based)

March	*Average waiting time in months*	
	Mean	*Median*
1991	7.57	4.43
1992	5.12	3.20
1993	4.53	3.18
1994	4.60	3.24
1995	4.04	2.85
1996	3.67	2.73

Estimated average time patients on the list had been waiting for elective admission England: (commissioner based)[1]

March	Average waiting time in months Mean	Median
1997	4.18	3.05
1998	4.62	3.43
1999	4.30	2.97
2000	4.30	2.97
2001	4.18	2.90
2002	4.01	2.92
2003	3.61	2.75
2004	2.85	2.35

[1] Commissioner based data is only available from 1994, provider based data is used prior to that date.

Source:
Department of Health form KH07

Wheelchairs

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many wheelchairs have been issued through the NHS or social services departments in each of the last seven years. [178496]

Dr. Ladyman: These figures are not held centrally.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Access to State Education

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will set out the educational provision and access to state education within the UK for *(a)* EU citizens, *(b)* non-EU citizens with work permits, *(c)* non-EU citizens with student visas and *(d)* asylum seekers pending determination of their cases. [177820]

Alan Johnson: For children, local education authorities have a legal duty to ensure that education is available to all those of compulsory school age (five to 16 years) within their area appropriate to age, abilities and aptitudes and any special education needs they may have, irrespective of the child's immigration status or rights of residence in a particular area.

All groups specified can study within FE and HE institutions in the UK subject to available places and meeting admissions criteria.

Eligibility for funded provision among these groups varies for FE and HE. In FE and HE, EU citizens who have been ordinarily resident in the European Economic Area (plus Switzerland) for three years before their course starts are eligible for home fee status. In FE, work permit holders who have been here for three years or more and asylum seekers who are in receipt of NASS benefits are eligible for home fees status, the other groups mentioned by the hon. Member are liable for tuition fees at the overseas rate. In HE, non-EU citizens with work permits or student visas and asylum seekers pending determination of their cases are not eligible for funded provision. However, people recognised as refugees by the UK Government are entitled to home fee status.

Eligibility for FE Learner Support Funds and HE student support also vary. Further information setting out these variations in more detail is as follows.

Eligibility for further education

	EU citizens	*Non-EU citizens with work permits*	*Non-EU citizens with student visas*	*Asylum seekers*
Young people Young people aged 16 to 19	Eligible for public funding if: EU national and resident in EEA for three years; or UK passport holder. Otherwise, liable for tuition fees at overseas rate.	Eligible for public funding if: resident in England for three years; or if accompanying parents with work permits. Otherwise, liable for tuition fees at overseas rate.	Ineligible for public funding. May access FE at overseas student tuition fee rates.	Eligible for public funding if supported by NASS or similar, or in the care of local authority. Otherwise, liable for tuition fees at overseas rate.
Adults Adults eligible for public funding may be required to contribute to the costs of their learning. There is a fee assumption that adult adults will contribute 25 per cent. of the basic cost of the course. This fee contribution may be varied at the discretion of the college. Fees for adults on low incomes may be waived.	Eligible for public funding if: EU national and resident in EEA for three years. Otherwise, liable for tuition fees at overseas rate.	Eligible for public funding if resident in England for three years. Otherwise, liable for tuition fees at overseas rate.	Ineligible for public funding. May access FE at overseas student tuition fee rates.	Eligible for public funding if supported by NASS or similar. Otherwise, liable for tuition fees at overseas rate.
FE Learner Support Funds All eligibility constraints on Learning Support Funding (LSF), for learners 16–18 who are undertaking state/ publicly funded courses have been removed. All learners enrolled on a LSC funded sixth form or FE course will have access to LSF including funding for transport, child care, residential and hardship.	EU citizens aged 16–19 are eligible for FE Learner Support Funds if they have been ordinarily resident in the UK for a three year period and have settled status in the UK. These students aged 19 plus are eligible for FE learner support funds if: (i) The student has been settled in the UK (ie with no restriction on the period of stay) (ii) The student must have	Non EU citizens with work permits are not eligible for FE Learning Support Funds.	Non EU citizens with s are not eligible for FE Learning Support Funds.	Asylum seekers aged between 16 and 19 are entitled to apply for help with essential course related expenses such as transport, equipment, books and materials. Those 19 plus with pending cases are not eligible for FE Learner Support Funds until ELE/ Exception Leave to Remain has been granted and provided they satisfy the three year residency

Eligibility for further education

	EU citizens	*Non-EU citizens with work permits*	*Non-EU citizens with student visas*	*Asylum seekers*
	been ordinarily resident in England or Wales and settled in the UK for the three years before the beginning of the course (iii) No part of the residence must have been mainly or wholly for the purposes of receiving an education.			requirement or refugee status has been granted.

Eligibility for higher education

EU nationals

EU nationals who have been resident in the EEA (or Switzerland) for three years before their course starts are entitled to be assessed for tuition fees as "home" students. The "home" rate of fees for 2004/05 is £1,150.

EU nationals are entitled to means tested help with their tuition fees but not entitled to a maintenance loan or any supplementary grants unless they are EEA migrant workers or have settled status in the UK and meet the three year residence requirement in the UK and Islands.

Non-EU citizens with work permits or student visas

Non-EU citizens with work permits or student visas are generally classified as "overseas" students and have to pay the full cost of their tuition.

Non-EU citizens with work permits or student visas are not eligible for higher education student support.

Asylum seekers

Asylum seekers pending determination of their cases are treated as overseas students. Those Asylum Seekers and their dependants who have been granted Discretionary Leave or Humanitarian Protection from the Home Office as a result of an asylum application or are formally recognised as a refugee by the UK Government may be treated as "home" students.

Asylum seekers and their dependants do not qualify for higher education student support.

Adult Learning

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discussions he has had with the Learning and Skills Council on its recent decision to withdraw funding from adult learning courses which are not vocational. [177570]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I have discussed with the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) its overall funding position for 2004–05. Adult learning funding through further education and our support for adult education services will continue to provide a wide range of learning from approved vocational qualifications to community based informal learning. As part of the normal annual planning cycle local LSCs discuss with learning providers the mix of provision that is required to meet the needs of local communities, learners and employers. Where there is a need for more vocational provision to meet the needs of learners and employers I would expect local LSCs and learning providers to re-direct resources to meet those priorities.

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what public funding has been spent on adult *(a)* literacy and *(b)* numeracy in Stoke-on-Trent North in each year since 1997. [177639]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The estimated total spend on "Skills For Life" (the Government's strategy for literacy, language and numeracy needs of all post-16 learners from pre-entry level up to and including level 2) and on Key Skills (essential skills of communication, application of number and information technology), from April 2001 to July 2003, in the Staffordshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area is set out in the following table.

£000

	Basic skills	*Key skills*
April 2001 to July 2001[1]	2,341	788
August 2001 to July 2002	3,123	1,006
August 2002 to July 2003	4,899	2,063

[1] The figures for April to July 2001 include costs incurred from August 2000 on learning aims continuing into April 2001.

From the information available to the LSC it has not been feasible to obtain estimates at constituency level or separate figures by subject without incurring disproportionate cost. Likewise it has not been feasible to obtain comparable figures for periods before April 2001 when the Skills for Life strategy was launched and the LSC was formed, but information shows it was considerably less than at present.

Adult Learning Inspectorate

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the full-time equivalent headcount of the Adult Learning Inspectorate was in each year since 1999–2000; and how much funding was allocated to it in each year. [178210]

Alan Johnson: The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) became operational in April 2001 and has been building up to its full responsibilities since then. The information requested is provided in the following table.

Operating year	*Full-time equivalent staff*	*Funding (£ million)*
2001–02	189.5	17.1
2002–03	225.5	24.5
2003–04	254	[1]27.6
2004–05	[2]272	[3]30.4

[1] Estimated.
[2] 31 May 2004.
[3] Forecast.

Notes:
1. Funding for 2003–04 is the forecast of expenditure.
2. Funding for 2004–05 is the latest planned expenditure.

Source:
ALI resource budget and expenditure figures.

The expenditure figure for 2001–02 is an update to the amount reported in the recent Departmental Annual Report, which contained an error. Corrective action is being taken.

Adult Skills Provision

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to maintain adult skills provision at *(a)* Basic level, *(b)* Level 2 and *(c)* Level 3 in Weston-super-Mare. [176978]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Government outlined their commitment to improving adult skills in "21st Century Skills" published in July 2003 and has set challenging PSA targets for skills improvement in basic skills and at Level 2.

The West of England Learning and Skills Council (LSC) is responsible for funding adult education and skills in Weston-super-Mare area through the local further education college and other work based training providers. The college has been performing well and plans for the creation of a new sixth form centre, alongside improvements to the main campus, have recently been approved by the LSC.

Discussions with the college about its three year development have included plans for a 32 per cent. growth in the number of basic skills learners and plans to maintain their current good attainment at Level 2 and Level 3.

The Strategic Area Review being carried out across the country will support continued collaboration between post-16 provision, the local education authority and the cluster of 11–16 schools in Weston-super-Mare.

Capital Allocations (School Buildings)

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much ring-fenced money for classroom building projects has been given by his Department to each local education authority in the South West in each of the last three years. [177195]

Mr. Miliband: The following table shows this Department's total capital allocations for school buildings to local education authorities in the South West from 2001–02 to 2003–04. It shows both ring-fenced and total allocations.

It is our policy to reduce the proportion of support that is ring-fenced for individual projects, and increasingly to allocate support direct to schools and authorities. This allows them to decide the priorities for investment. For example, through devolved formula capital, a typical primary school of 250 pupils will receive £25,500, and a typical secondary school of 1,000 pupils will receive £87,250 in 2005–06.

South West capital allocations 2001–02 to 2003–04

£000

	2001–02		2002–03		2003–04	
LEA	*Total allocations*	*of which: ringfenced*[1]	*Total allocations*	*of which: ringfenced*[1]	*Total allocations*	*of which: ringfenced*[1]
Bath and North East Somerset	4,607	799	11,227	4,757	12,198	5,497
Bournemouth	4,657	2,022	3,353	112	5,066	664
Bristol, City of	16,115	6,999	13,219	1,584	73,789	60,745
Cornwall	16,897	2,792	24,109	3,323	99,902	73,613
Devon	23,845	3,498	41,085	7,043	122,740	79,797
Dorset	10,115	873	19,161	5,205	22,855	5,434
Gloucestershire	21,165	2,852	22,917	1,921	28,486	3,352
Isles of Scilly	183	52	198	26	285	76
North Somerset	5,241	1,199	5,606	472	17,971	2,408
Plymouth	5,876	2,016	10,936	1,865	16,397	1,557
Poole	5,942	4,210	5,799	2,729	6,161	582
Somerset	11,760	1,268	16,045	1,283	19,249	587
South Gloucestershire	9,769	945	14,110	4,713	14,853	359
Swindon	3,386	215	13,820	905	80,240	63,063
Torbay	5,993	2,700	9,422	398	9,470	173
Wiltshire	10,170	626	15,567	466	27,615	3,983

[1] Includes allocations ring-fenced for the authority(including any PFI credits), but not funding direct to schools whether or not passported via the LEA. Ring-fencing may be either to a project or to meeting ministerial priorities.

Obesity (Children)

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures he is taking to combat bullying that occurs as a result of childhood obesity. [177649]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Our free pack 'Bullying: Don't Suffer in Silence' is designed to help schools deal effectively with all forms of bullying. The pack states: "Bullying can take many forms ... This may be because of individual characteristics", and we recognise that regardless of how it is manifested, bullying is a serious problem which puts the emotional well-being and educational achievement of pupils at risk. The pack (which was updated in September 2002) is freely available to be ordered by all schools. All secondary and middle schools have received a copy as part of the KS3 behaviour and attendance training.

In September 2003 I launched a new information film aimed at children and young people. The film encourages pupils who are experiencing bullying to tell someone who can help so they do not suffer in silence. I

also announced an anti-bullying charter for schools. This has been drawn up in consultation with professional associations and voluntary sector partners, and it was launched in November 2003 at the first of a series of regional conferences, called "Make the Difference", for schools and other partners. The charter has been made available to schools. The conferences (nine in total) culminate with a final conference in Chorley on June 14.

The purpose of the conferences has been to provide a forum for schools and related partners to share good practice. This has been facilitated by workshops and exhibitor stalls where attendees can gather a host of information on combating bullying.

Circus Performers

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) whether there is a skills shortage in the North West Region for *(a)* clowns, *(b)* tightrope walkers, *(c)* jugglers, *(d)* stilts performers, *(e)* unicyclists and *(f)* other circus performers; [177132]

(2) what his assessment is of the need to train people in circus skills in the North West Region. [177133]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) have the remit for assessing skills needs in their sector. The Creative and Cultural Industries SSC (CCISSC), which is in development, will cover circus performers. The SSC is currently reviewing the need for Creative Apprenticeships within the sector and as part of this review the needs of the circus industry will be assessed.

Regionally, the NW Development Agency, working in partnership with stakeholders in the region, has the lead responsibility for developing and taking forward the economic strategy for the North West. The strategy has a strong sectoral focus concentrating on those sectors of importance and potential importance to the North West economy. Tourism is one of the priority sectors in the North West.

While touring circuses bring pleasure to many, in determining the region's tourism priorities no assessment has been made of the contribution they make to the North West economy and there are no plans to do so.

Education Funding

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the cost per pupil of education in *(a)* primary school, *(b)* secondary school and *(c)* sixth form in Greater London was in each of the last seven years, broken down by borough. [176831]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* The information requested has been placed in the Libraries.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much, at today's prices, was spent on average per *(a)* secondary and *(b)* primary school in each of the last 15 years; and what the planned spending is in each of the next four years. [172933]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* The available information is contained within the following tables.

Decisions on the allocation of resources in future years between each of the different sectors of education will be taken and announced later in the year.

Average spend per (a) secondary and (b) primary school in each of the last 15 years

Primary schools

	Net current expenditure (£000)	Number of primary schools	Average spend per primary school (£000)
1987–88	6,664,667	19,319	345
1988–99	6,435,677	19,232	335
1989–90	—	—	—
1990–91	—	—	—
1991–92	—	—	—
1992–93	—	—	—
1993–94	—	—	—
1994–95	—	—	—
1995–96	—	—	—
1996–97	—	—	—
1997–98	—	—	—
1998–99	—	—	—
1999–2000	10,248,425	18,158	564
2000–01	11,014,589	18,069	610
2001–02	11,804,357	17,985	656

Pre-primary and primary schools

	Net current expenditure (£000)	Number of primary schools	Average spend pre-primary and primary school (£000)
1987–88	—	—	—
1988–99	—	—	—
1989–90	7,237,762	19,728	367
1990–91	8,081,461	19,615	412
1991–92	7,812,948	19,488	401
1992–93	9,077,080	19,391	468
1993–94	9,184,320	19,237	477
1994–95	9,372,113	19,104	491
1995–96	9,350,748	19,029	491
1996–97	9,319,716	18,938	492
1997–98	9,192,745	18,847	488
1998–99	9,706,290	18,756	518
1999–2000	10,637,498	18,674	570
2000–01	11,567,295	18,577	623
2001–02	12,540,414	18,481	679

Secondary schools

	Net current expenditure (£000)	Number of secondary schools	Average spend per secondary school (£000)
1987–88	8,540,156	4,153	2,056
1988–99	8,496,111	4,035	2,106
1989–90	8,419,497	3,976	2,118
1990–91	8,990,987	3,897	2,307
1991–92	8,293,519	3,847	2,156
1992–93	8,908,650	3,773	2,361
1993–94	7,846,904	3,629	2,162
1994–95	7,636,242	3,614	2,113
1995–96	7,445,108	3,594	2,072
1996–97	7,341,423	3,569	2,057
1997–98	7,259,360	3,567	2,035
1998–99	7,426,109	3,560	2,086
1999–2000	9,668,610	3,550	2,724
2000–01	10,442,651	3,481	3,000
2001–02	11,441,503	3,457	3,310

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from local education authorities' Section 52 Outturn Statements submitted to the DfES from 1999–2000 onwards and the ODPM's RO1 statement previously. 1999–2000 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance. Financial data is in £000's. Figures are adjusted to 2002–03 prices using the March 2004 GDP deflators.

2. In 1987–88 and 1988–89 pre-primary expenditure was not collected on R01. From 1989–90 onwards expenditure was not distinguished between pre-primary and primary sectors until the inception of the Section 52 outturn statements in 1999–2000. Pre-primary expenditure does not match the number of pre-primary schools because it also includes expenditure on nurseries in the private sector, which are not included in the school count.
3. Net Current Expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEA. Between 1987–88 and 1992–93 NCE after recharges was not recorded on RO1. In these years Net Recurrent Expenditure is used and consequently figures in those years may not be strictly comparable with future years.
4. Spending in 1997–98 reflects the transfer of monies from local government to central Government for the nursery vouchers scheme. These were returned to local government in 1998–99.
5. The number of schools is taken from the Annual Schools Census. Middle schools are included as deemed secondary.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding was spent on education in Crosby in each year from 1992 to 1997. [177863]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is submitted to the Department according to local education authority areas rather than constituency level and as such the figures provided are for Sefton LEA:

Net current expenditure

	£
1992–93	127,566
1993–94	120,072
1994–95	121,425
1995–96	127,284
1996–97	129,224
1997–98	129,018

Notes:
1. The financial data are taken from Sefton LEA's RO1 statement submitted to ODPM.
2. In 1992–93 net current expenditure after recharges was not collected on RO1. In this year net recurrent expenditure is used and consequently figures for this year may not be strictly comparable with those for future years.
3. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEA.

Education Services (Essex)

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teaching assistants were employed in state schools in *(a)* the County of Essex in each year from 1980 to 1997 and *(b)* the County of Essex and the unitary authorities of Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock in each year from 1998 to 2003. [173324]

Mr. Miliband: The information is shown in the following tables. The first table shows the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) teaching assistants[1] in maintained schools in Essex LEA in each January between 1992 and 1998. Information is only available from 1992 when teaching assistants data were first collected. The second table shows the number of FTE teaching assistants in Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock LEAs after local government re-organisation in April 1998, in each January between 1999 and 2003.

It is expected that information on the number of teaching assistants by LEA for 2004 will be available in the near future. A table will be placed in the House of Commons Library.

[1] Includes teaching assistants, special needs support staff and support staff for minority ethnic pupils.

	Essex	*Southend-on-Sea*	*Thurrock*	*Total*
1992	620	—	—	—
1993	670	—	—	—
1994	900	—	—	—
1995	1,270	—	—	—
1996	1,430	—	—	—
1997	1,700	—	—	—
1998	1,830	—	—	—
1999	1,610	220	200	2,030
2000	1,740	280	290	2,310
2001	2,070	350	330	2,750
2002	3,110	460	430	4,000
2003	3,450	560	530	4,540

Source:
Annual School Census

Education Spending

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much on average per child was contributed from public funds to the education of school-age children in each year since 1997 for which figures are available, broken down by local authority area. [172902]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is contained within the following table:

Total funding per pupil aged 3 to 1)

£

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Camden	3,830	3,850	4,120	4,490	4,770	4,900	5,200
Greenwich	3,490	3,550	3,810	4,200	4,440	4,540	4,740
Hackney	4,020	4,050	4,370	4,710	4,950	5,130	5,400
Hammersmith and Fulham	3,750	3,810	4,050	4,420	4,700	4,940	5,140
Islington	3,720	3,820	4,070	4,530	4,850	4,990	5,190
Kensington and Chelsea	3,580	3,680	4,020	4,390	4,710	5,030	5,280
Lambeth	4,000	4,070	4,320	4,660	4,890	5,080	5,240
Lewisham	3,690	3,760	3,970	4,270	4,540	4,700	4,910
Southwark	3,730	3,800	4,040	4,360	4,620	4,790	4,960
Tower Hamlets	3,970	4,090	4,460	4,810	5,130	5,290	5,510
Wandsworth	3,450	3,480	3,700	3,990	4,230	4,280	4,610
Westminster	3,640	3,660	3,950	4,270	4,510	4.700	5,040
Barking and Dagenham	2,890	3,060	3,180	3,440	3,670	3,800	3,970
Barnet	2,870	2,930	3,060	3,240	3,510	3,600	3,760
Bexley	2,730	2,810	2,900	3,090	3,270	3,360	3,490
Brent	3,300	3,370	3,540	3,750	4,030	4,170	4,380

Total funding per pupil aged 3 to 1)

£

	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Bromley	2,730	2,800	2,920	3,120	3,310	3,370	3,490
Croydon	2,950	3,000	3,150	3,350	3,560	3,670	3,780
Ealing	2,990	3,130	3,290	3,570	3,830	3,900	4,170
Enfield	2,980	3,050	3,210	3,410	3,670	3,800	3,930
Haringey	3,390	3,450	3,710	4,010	4,300	4,420	4,610
Harrow	2,840	2,900	3,020	3,240	3,450	3,550	3,780
Havering	2,720	2,800	2,890	3,080	3,280	3,360	3,490
Hillingdon	2,850	2,920	3,070	3,260	3,400	3,490	3,670
Hounslow	3,000	3,090	3,250	3,480	3,720	3,860	4,090
Kingston upon Thames	2,680	2,740	2,870	3,080	3,310	3,370	3,490
Merton	2,860	2,910	3,050	3,300	3,560	3,570	3,780
Newham	3,460	3,560	3,720	3,990	4,270	4,380	4,500
Redbridge	2,960	3,000	3,110	3,290	3,480	3,550	3,620
Richmond upon Thames	2,730	2,740	2,850	3,070	3,250	3,310	3,460
Sutton	2,860	2,880	2,990	3,180	3,370	3,430	3,580
Waltham Forest	3,250	3,280	3,460	3,720	4,000	4,120	4,230
Birmingham	2,750	2,850	3,040	3,350	3,580	3,650	3,820
Coventry	2,620	2,730	2,880	3,130	3,270	3,330	3,490
Dudley	2,340	2,470	2,600	2,820	2,950	3,040	3,180
Sandwell	2,590	2,720	2,870	3,100	3,290	3,400	3,580
Solihull	2,400	2,480	2,580	2,790	2,930	2,980	3,210
Walsall	2,510	2,600	2,760	3,000	3,140	3,220	3,360
Wolverhampton	2,620	2,710	2,890	3,160	3,340	3,490	3,630
Knowsley	2,870	2,980	3,160	3,520	3,780	3,880	3,970
Liverpool	2,830	2,940	3,120	3,510	3,740	3,830	3,910
St. Helens	2,510	2,590	2,710	2,980	3,210	3,290	3,520
Sefton	2,510	2,600	2,730	3,000	3,180	3,260	3,440
Wirral	2,570	2,700	2,820	3,100	3,310	3,400	3,540
Bolton	2,490	2,580	2,740	2,990	3,130	3,220	3,350
Bury	2,410	2,510	2,650	2,870	3,010	3,100	3,260
Manchester	2,910	3,020	3,260	3,660	3,880	3,970	4,130
Oldham	2,570	2,660	2,840	3,070	3,240	3,390	3,560
Rochdale	2,590	2,680	2,850	3,120	3,300	3,440	3,610
Salford	2,570	2,690	2,870	3,220	3,450	3,510	3,680
Stockport	2,380	2,460	2,590	2,820	2,960	3,010	3,170
Tameside	2,470	2,560	2,700	2,930	3,120	3,210	3,370
Trafford	2,450	2,520	2,680	2,900	3,070	3,100	3,260
Wigan	2,450	2,530	2,670	2,890	3,040	3,100	3,280
Barnsley	2,530	2,620	2,770	3,000	3,180	3,270	3,490
Doncaster	2,570	2,660	2,810	3,030	3,190	3,270	3,510
Rotherham	2,560	2,620	2,780	3,070	3,260	3,320	3,500
Sheffield	2,580	2,650	2,830	3,140	3,330	3,390	3,520
Bradford	2,650	2,730	2,930	3,250	3,480	3,530	3,640
Calderdale	2,500	2,600	2,770	3,000	3,140	3,210	3,380
Kirklees	2,540	2,630	2,800	3,020	3,190	3,270	3,440
Leeds	2,500	2,580	2,730	3,020	3,210	3,300	3,450
Wakefield	2,460	2,520	2,660	2,910	3,060	3,140	3,270
Gateshead	2,480	2,630	2,780	3,080	3,290	3,360	3,560
Newcastle upon Tyne	2,780	2,800	2,940	3,250	3,480	3,550	3,710
North Tyneside	2,460	2,540	2,670	2,950	3,140	3,240	3,410
South Tyneside	2,600	2,700	2,860	3,150	3,380	3,450	3,680
Sunderland	2,550	2,640	2,770	3,040	3,260	3,330	3,540
Bath and North East Somerset	2,410	2,490	2,640	2,850	2,970	3,010	3,150
Bristol, City of	2,540	2,610	2,760	3,040	3,220	3,320	3,500
North Somerset	2,460	2,550	2,700	2,910	3,010	3,070	3,200
South Gloucestershire	2,370	2,450	2,590	2,770	2,870	2,920	3,060
Hartlepool	2,550	2,650	2,790	3,050	3,240	3,330	3,580
Middlesbrough	2,680	2,800	2,980	3,250	3,490	3,600	3,820
Redcar and Cleveland	2,570	2,660	2,790	3,070	3,300	3,370	3,570
Stockton-on-Tees	2,520	2,600	2,760	3,050	3,280	3,360	3,560
Kingston Upon Hull, City of	2,670	2,730	2,890	3,190	3,380	3,470	3,660
East Riding of Yorkshire	2,440	2,530	2,660	2,900	3,040	3,080	3,170
North East Lincolnshire	2,570	2,660	2,820	3,070	3,250	3,330	3,420
North Lincolnshire	2,530	2,660	2,800	3,040	3,160	3,220	3,380
North Yorkshire	2,490	2,570	2,710	2,940	3,080	3,140	3,270
York	2,430	2,510	2,640	2,890	3,000	3,040	3,120
Bedfordshire	2,590	2,650	2,770	3,030	3,220	3,280	3,340
Luton	2,870	2,900	3,070	3,290	3,480	3,590	3,780
Buckinghamshire	2,660	2,700	2,820	3,040	3,210	3,280	3,380
Milton Keynes	2,790	2,790	2,910	3,130	3,300	3,390	3,510
Derbyshire	2,420	2,500	2,630	2,850	2,970	3,050	3,190

Total funding per pupil aged 3 to 1)

£

	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Derby	2,580	2,670	2,850	3,070	3,210	3,310	3,450
Dorset	2,550	2,580	2,690	2,910	3,040	3,090	3,160
Poole	2,540	2,540	2,630	2,810	2,950	3,010	3,110
Bournemouth	2,660	2,670	2,780	3,010	3,110	3,150	3,220
Durham	2,500	2,600	2,750	3,010	3,220	3,260	3,390
Darlington	2,480	2,560	2,720	2,970	3,130	3,180	3,320
East Sussex	2,670	2,750	2,870	3,130	3,290	3,360	3,450
Brighton and Hove	2,740	2,820	2,960	3,220	3,400	3,470	3,580
Hampshire	2,540	2,600	2,700	2,910	3,090	3,150	3,260
Portsmouth	2,690	2,770	2,900	3,110	3,320	3,410	3,530
Southampton	2,750	2,840	2,950	3,180	3,380	3,460	3,590
Leicestershire	2,450	2,500	2,620	2,820	2,940	2,970	3,050
Leicester	2.740	2,830	3,010	3.260	3,440	3,550	3,750
Rutland	2,440	2,520	2,690	2,880	3,050	3,090	3,280
Staffordshire	2,400	2,460	2,580	2,800	2,930	2,980	3,100
Stoke-on-Trent	2,510	2,590	2,720	3,020	3,250	3,350	3,590
Wiltshire	2,520	2,580	2,710	2,920	3,030	3,090	3,240
Swindon	2,560	2,560	2,670	2,870	2,990	3,050	3,220
Bracknell Forest	2,690	2,740	2,830	3,030	3,200	3,280	3,410
Windsor and Maidenhead	2,680	2,760	2,860	3,110	3,300	3,360	3,460
West Berkshire	2.520	2,630	2,740	2,990	3,160	3,200	3,390
Reading	2,650	2,770	2,900	3,180	3.350	3,500	3,640
Slough	3,050	3,220	3,370	3,600	3,820	3,950	4,090
Wokingham	2,460	2,520	2,610	2,830	3,000	3,060	3,240
Cambridgeshire	2,460	2,540	2,690	2,890	3,010	3,070	3,250
Peterborough	2,660	2,740	2,910	3,130	3,270	3,360	3,540
Cheshire	2,440	2.500	2,620	2,840	2,970	3,020	3,160
Halton	2,670	2,720	2,860	3,160	3,400	3,490	3,720
Warrington	2,420	2,480	2,590	2,790	2,930	2,990	3,100
Devon	2,610	2,670	2,760	2,970	3,090	3,140	3,260
Plymouth	2,640	2,690	2,790	3,020	3,130	3,210	3,290
Torbay	2,670	2,690	2,790	3,010	3,130	3,180	3,270
Essex	2,690	2,740	2,850	3,080	3,240	3,300	3,410
Southend-on-Sea	2,740	2,780	2,900	3,140	3,330	3,400	3,490
Thurrock	2,830	2,890	3,000	3,220	3,410	3,520	3,640
Herefordshire	2,640	2,680	2,810	3,030	3,150	3,230	3,400
Worcestershire	2,540	2,530	2,620	2,840	2,980	3,030	3,120
Kent	2,650	2,730	2,840	3,080	3,250	3,310	3,410
Medway	2,630	2,700	2,820	3,040	3,200	3,290	3,340
Lancashire	2,530	2,610	2,750	2,990	3,140	3,200	3,300
Blackburn with Darwen	2,680	2,800	3,030	3,280	3,470	3,550	3,790
Blackpool	2,550	2,660	2,780	3,030	3,180	3,290	3,490
Nottinghamshire	2,500	2,540	2,660	2,890	3,020	3,080	3,180
Nottingham	2,820	2,880	3,060	3,350	3,570	3,700	3,840
Shropshire	2,550	2,590	2,720	2,930	3,080	3,150	3,300
Telford and Wrekin	2,610	2,670	2,800	3,050	3,210	3,240	3,380
Cornwall	2,550	2,670	2,800	3,030	3,180	3,240	3,310
Cumbria	2,420	2,560	2,700	2,950	3,130	3,190	3,330
Gloucestershire	2,500	2.560	2,700	2,920	3,050	3,110	3,210
Hertfordshire	2,680	2,720	2,830	3,050	3,210	3,270	3,350
Isle of Wight	2,760	2,840	2,960	3,230	3,410	3,470	3,510
Lincolnshire	2,530	2,620	2,740	2,960	3,120	3,190	3,330
Norfolk	2,590	2,640	2,770	3,000	3,160	3,230	3,330
Northamptonshire	2,470	2,540	2,680	2,890	3,030	3,090	3,250
Northumberland	2,480	2,570	2,700	2,950	3,140	3,180	3,310
Oxfordshire	2,660	2,690	2,810	3,050	3,200	3,270	3,390
Somerset	2,510	2,570	2,710	2,940	3,070	3,130	3,250
Suffolk	2,550	2,570	2,690	2,900	3,050	3,100	3,180
Surrey	2,660	2,700	2,810	3,010	3,180	3,240	3,330
Warwickshire	2,420	2,510	2,650	2,850	2,980	3,060	3,220
West Sussex	2,670	2,680	2,770	2,980	3,140	3,210	3,310

Notes:

1. Figures reflect education Standard Spending Assessment/Education Formula Spending (SSA/EFS) settlement and revenue grants in DfES Departmental Expenditure Limits relevant to EFS pupils aged 3 to 15.

2. Figures exclude EMAs and grants not allocated at LEA level and the pensions transfer to EFS and Learning Skills Council (LSC) for 2003–04.

3. The pupil numbers used are those underlying the SSA/EFS settlement calculations plus PLASC 3-year-old maintained pupils and estimated 3–4 year olds funded through state support in maintained and other educational institutions where these are not included in the SSA pupil numbers.

4. 1997–98 figures for LEAs subject to Local Government Re-organisation (LGR) in that year have been estimated, pro-rata to their post LGR figures.

5. 2003–04 and 2002–03 figures are provisional estimates as some grants have not yet been finalised/audited.
6. Real terms figures are based on GDP deflators as at 26 March 2004 (2002–03 prices).
7. Per pupil figures are rounded to the nearest 10 so may not sum.

Examination Boards

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Romford of 4 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1424W, on examination boards, how the £100 million will be allocated over the next two years in order to ensure the modernisation and safe delivery of the examination system. [177887]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 14 June 2004]:* The money has been allocated to the examinations modernisation programme as follows:

£ million

	2004–05	*2005–06*
Increasing examiner fees and improving marking quality	24	24
Securing improved and consolidated physical logistics	7	6
Reducing the administrative burden on exams offices	5	6
Improving exams office procedures and equipment	10	7
Improving use of technology in exams administration	8	3

Examination Entries

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much was spent by schools on examination entries in each year since 1997. [177884]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 14 June 2004]:* In 2002–03, maintained primary, secondary and special schools in England spent £155 million on examination fees. This covers the costs of test and examination entry fees and any accreditation costs related to pupils, and includes GCSEs, A/AS levels and GNVQs.

It was only in 2002–03 that the Department began collecting information in sufficient detail to answer this question. Therefore, no comparable data is available for previous years.

Further Education (Staff)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many full-time equivalent staff have been employed by further education colleges in each year since 1995. [177260]

Alan Johnson: The information requested is routinely published by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in Staff Statistics. These volumes can be downloaded from the LSC website:

http://www.lsc.gov.uk/National/Partners/Data/Statistics/StaffStatistics/StaffStatistics.htm.

A paper copy of the most recent edition of "Staff Statistics" will be placed in the Library.

Learning and Skills Council (Merseyside)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills why the Learning and Skills Council on Merseyside has not informed the further education colleges of their 2004–05 budget. [177264]

Alan Johnson: The Learning and Skills Council has delayed confirming the allocation of budgets to further education colleges for the academic year starting in August 2004 while it concludes an assessment of its budget commitments in the financial year 2004–05. I expect that the LSC will shortly be in a position to conclude its allocation process.

Learning and Skills Development Agency

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if he will list the work carried out by the Learning and Skills Development Agency on behalf of the *(a)* Learning and Skills Council and *(b)* Government; [177684]

(2) if he will make a statement on the budget of the Learning and Skills Development Agency. [177683]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Development Agency. Chris Hughes, the Chief Executive, will write to the hon. Gentleman with this information and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Office for Fair Access

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the planned *(a)* full-time equivalent headcount and *(b)* funding allocations for the Office for Fair Access are in each of the first three years of its existence. [178205]

Alan Johnson: As we set out in the Regulatory Impact Assessment which we republished on 1 April 2004, we estimate the cost of the Office for Fair Access will average around £500,000 per year, which includes staffing needs. The Office has not yet been established and it is not possible at this stage to provide a full-time equivalent headcount.

Overseas Universities (UK)

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many overseas universities accredited outside the UK were operating in the UK in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [178147]

Alan Johnson: These figures are not kept centrally. Overseas universities accredited outside the UK are free to offer their own awards in the UK provided that they make it clear that in doing so they are not offering qualifications from a UK institution and that accreditation is from overseas. Overseas universities wishing to operate campuses in the UK must apply to the Privy Council Office for permission to use university title for that operation in the UK.

Performance Tables

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total cost was of producing and publishing the most recent *(a)* primary school performance tables of achievements in Key Stage 2 tests, *(b)* secondary school performance tables of

achievements in Key Stage 3 tests, *(c)* secondary school performance tables of achievements in GCSE examinations and vocational qualifications, *(d)* school and college performance tables of achievements in A/AS examinations and vocational qualifications, *(e)* pilot tables testing the calculation and presentation of a Key Stage 2-GCSE/GNVQ value added measure and *(f)* pilot tables testing the reporting of achievements in all approved qualifications at age 16 years. [177885]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 14 June 2004]:* The costs of producing and publishing the most recent (2003) school and college performance tables were as follows:

	£ million
(a) Primary school performance tables of achievements in Key Stage 2 tests	0.47
(b) Secondary school performance tables of achievements in Key Stage 3 tests *(c)* Secondary school performance tables of achievements in GCSE examinations and vocational qualifications *(d)* School and college performance tables of achievements in A/AS examinations and vocational qualifications	1.66
(e) Pilot tables testing the calculation and presentation of a Key Stage 2-GCSE/GNVQ value added measure	0.10
(f) Pilot tables testing the reporting of achievements in all approved qualifications at age 16	0.11

Notes:

1. The figures shown above are programme costs and do not include departmental staff costs.
2. The costs for QCA's data collection are not included in the figures shown above.
3. The secondary school performance tables of achievements in Key Stage 3 tests, the secondary school performance tables of achievements in GCSE examinations and vocational qualifications and the school and college performance tables of achievements in A/AS examinations and vocational qualifications are managed as one exercise so there are no separate costings.

Post-16 Education

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps his Department is taking to increase the staying on rate of children over the age of 16 years. [177871]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: We are tackling the causes of low participation at post-16 through our 14–19 strategy by providing a more flexible, coherent and better quality 14–19 curriculum; quality advice and guidance; and additional financial support.

This includes: offering greater flexibility at Key Stage 4 and more vocational subjects at GCSE; introducing an entitlement to an apprenticeship place for all 16 to 17 year olds with five GCSEs at grades A-G, including Maths and English, from September 2004; and providing impartial advice and guidance to 13 to 19 years olds through our national Connexions Service. We have also introduced Education Maintenance Allowances across the country from September 2004, after extensive piloting which showed a strong impact on participation rates, increased participation among the eligible group of 5.9 percentage points.

The Working Group on 14–19 Reform, led by Mike Tomlinson, is seeking to tackle low post-16 participation and achievement. In their interim report, published in February, they propose a diploma framework consisting of high-quality programmes and progression opportunities so that young people are motivated to continue learning. The final report is expected in the autumn.

Probationary Teachers

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what action he has taken to counsel and support probationary teachers in the school environment; and how much money he has dedicated for such counselling and support. [178807]

Mr. Miliband: All Newly Qualified Teachers receive an individually tailored programme of guidance, monitoring, assessment and support for their induction. This involves a tutor and a 10 per cent. reduction to their teaching timetable. Funding for induction is part of Education Formula Spending, not separately ring-fenced.

Pupil Costs (Staffordshire)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much it cost to educate a pupil in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in Staffordshire in 2003–04. [173285]

Mr. Miliband: The latest date for which this information is available is 2002–03 and is given in the table. The information requested for 2003–04 will not be collected by the Department until October 2004 but I will write to the hon. Member when it is available.

2002–03

	Net current expenditure per pupil
Primary Education	2,680
Secondary Education	3,270

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from Staffordshire LEA's Section 52 Outturn Statement submitted to the DfES. 2002–03 data is subject to change by the LEA. Figures are rounded to the nearest £10.
2. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they are calculated differently and include an apportionment of LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers.
3. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEA.
4. The NCE per pupil figures for primary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in the maintained primary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained primary schools sector.
5. The NCE per pupil figures for secondary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained secondary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained secondary schools sector.
6. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

School Absences

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the relationship between levels of authorised and unauthorised absence from school. [174719]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 20 May 2004]:* In general, there is a statistically positive relationship between authorised and unauthorised absence levels in schools. There is a tendency for schools with low levels of authorised absence to also have low levels of unauthorised absence and vice versa. The relationship is stronger for secondary schools than for primary schools and, in both sectors, there are numerous exceptions to the general rule.

The latest detailed published analysis of the relationship can be found in the Department's Statistical Bulletin 13/01 "Pupil absence and truancy from schools in England, 2000/2001". Paragraphs 14 to 16 and Tables 4 and 5 of this Bulletin are particularly relevant. A copy has been placed in the Library. It is also available at www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SBU/b000309/index.shtml Furthermore, when concerted action is taken to tackle absences, it is usual to see an increase in unauthorised absences. This is due to schools taking a stricter stance on authorising absences leading to more absences being classed as "unauthorised". In turn, schools will see an increase in attendance levels: (i) as pupils and parents come to understand that certain types of absence will no longer be tolerated; and (ii) as this clearer identification of truants leads to speedier interventions and return to the classroom. More schools are adopting this approach: 2002–03 saw the highest level of school attendance on record—93.17 per cent.—with schools identifying more truants than previously, but with the average number of sessions missed by each secondary school truant falling to 15—a decrease of 25 per cent. since 1997.

We have made it clear that in response to a consensus view among schools and LEAs, it is our intention to measure attendance once the period for the current national Public Service Agreement target ends.

School Budget Deficits

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools have reported a set budget deficit for this year. [177959]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is not yet available. The Department is due to collect the data relating to 2003–04 financial year from October 2004.

Schools (Leyton and Wanstead)

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the main improvements have been at each school in Leyton and Wanstead since 2000. [178192]

Mr. Miliband: The constituency Leyton and Wanstead covers part of both Waltham Forest and Redbridge local education authorities. Performance level information has been supplied for each school within this constituency.

Table 1: Key Stage 2 test results of all pupils in maintained schools in Leyton and Wanstead parliamentary constituency

Percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above

DfES number	*School name*	*Type of establishment*	*2003*			*2002*		
			English	*Maths*	*Science*	*English*	*Maths*	*Science*
3172042	Aldersbrook Primary School	Community	69	67	82	91	75	93
3172054	Snaresbrook Primary School	Community	78	80	83	69	75	87
3173300	Wanstead Church School	Voluntary aided	100	81	100	94	87	97
3173504	Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School	Voluntary aided	89	84	100	93	93	97
3202008	Barclay Junior School	Community	68	70	83	53	54	74
3202012	Church Mead Junior School	Community	57	57	70	61	62	80
3202014	Davies Lane Junior School	Community	43	37	55	43	36	57
3202022	Newport Junior School	Community	63	56	70	68	49	73
3202065	The Beaumont School	Community	47	42	53	41	35	51
3202067	Dawlish Primary School	Community	87	87	100	72	67	89
3202069	Gwyn Jones Primary School	Community	70	77	90	86	83	91
3202072	George Tomlinson Primary School	Community	80	66	92	77	82	97
3202077	Cann Hall Primary School	Community	65	73	93	68	85	96
3202079	Jenny Hammond School	Community	75	92	100	86	86	96
3202084	Mayville Primary School	Community	42	60	60	—	—	—
3203301	St Joseph's Catholic Junior School	Voluntary aided	94	89	93	93	100	100

Percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above

DfES Number	*School name*	*Type of establishment*	*2001*			*2000*		
			English	*Maths*	*Science*	*English*	*Maths*	*Science*
3172042	Aldersbrook Primary School	Community	68	56	79	83	76	89
3172054	Snaresbrook Primary School	Community	91	88	97	82	84	91
3173300	Wanstead Church School	Voluntary aided	91	88	97	94	97	97
3173504	Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School	Voluntary aided	92	80	100	93	84	98
3202008	Barclay Junior School	Community	69	57	78	44	44	61
3202012	Church Mead Junior School	Community	54	53	75	67	78	93
3202014	Davies Lane Junior School	Community	38	37	54	61	50	60
3202022	Newport Junior School	Community	67	49	62	51	39	51
3202065	The Beaumont School	Community	68	62	81	71	74	81
3202067	Dawlish Primary School	Community	82	82	100	74	74	88
3202069	Gwyn Jones Primary School	Community	88	73	82	82	65	85
3202072	George Tomlinson Primary School	Community	67	61	92	69	67	64

Percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above

DfES Number	School name	Type of establishment	2001 English	2001 Maths	2001 Science	2000 English	2000 Maths	2000 Science
3202077	Cann Hall Primary School	Community	62	70	85	74	79	93
3202079	Jenny Hammond School	Community	83	93	97	—	—	—
3202084	Mayville Primary School	Community	—	—	—	—	—	—
3203301	St Joseph's Catholic Junior School	Voluntary aided	98	98	100	83	85	92

Note:
3202017 Downsell Primary is not included on the table as it recently amalgamated and previous results relate to the Junior School.

Table 2: Key Stage 3 assessments tests results of pupils in all maintained schools in Leyton Wanstead parliamentary constituency

Percentage achieving level 5 or above 2003

DfES number	School names	Type of establishment	2003 English	2003 Maths	2003 Science	2002 English	2002 Maths	2002 Science
3174021	Wanstead High School	Community	70	74	74	79	71	67
3204059	Tom Hood School	Community	44	56	56	46	63	50
3204061	Connaught School for Girls	Community	73	61	58	79	77	80
3204062	George Mitchell Community School	Community	32	44	42	-	99	97
3204064	Norlington School for Boys	Community	43	68	58	35	41	38
3204069	Leytonstone School	Community	58	65	61	0	0	0
3207011	Belmont Park School	Community Special	25	75	75	56	50	63

Percentage achieving level 5 or above 2003

DfES number	School names	Type of establishment	2002 KS2-KS3 VA measure	2003 KS2-KS3 VA measure
3174021	Wanstead High School	Community	100.1	99.6
3204059	Tom Hood School	Community	99.6	99.7
3204061	Connaught School for Girls	Community	101.8	101.8
3204062	George Mitchell Community School	Community	100.1	97.8
3204064	Norlington School for Boys	Community	99.9	99.1
3204069	Leytonstone	Community	100.8	99.5

Percentage achieving level 5 or above 2003

DfES number	School names	Type of establishment	2002 KS2-KS3 VA measure	2003 KS2-KS3 VA measure
3207011	School Belmont Park School	Community Special	102.7	107.5

Notes:
2002 figures are based on data checked by schools as part of the Performance Tables checking exercise.
Prior to this schools did not have the opportunity to check and correct their underlying data and therefore figures prior to 2002 should not be released.
In 2002 pupils with missing results were included within the denominator for calculations while in previous years they were excluded.

Table 3: GCSE/GNVQ results of 15 year old pupils in all maintained schools in Leyton and Wanstead parliamentary constituency

Percentage of 15 year old achieving five or more grades A-C*

DfES number	School name	Type of establishment	2003	2002	2001	2000
3174021	Wanstead High School	Community	56	51	5	54
3204059	Tom Hood School	Community	40	45	42	38
3204061	Connaught School for Girls	Community	64	64	59	48
3204062	George Mitchell Community School	Community	33	20	24	33
3204064	Norlington School for Boys	Community	44	44	34	39
3204069	Leytonstone School	Community	50	48	47	42

Percentage of 15 year old achieving five or more grades A-C*

DfES number	School name	Type of establishment	KS3-GCSE/ GNVQ VA measure 2002	KS3-GCSE/ GNVC VA measure 2003
3174021	Wanstead High School	Community	101.5	99.2
3204059	Tom Hood School	Community	101.4	99.3
3204061	Connaught School for Girls	Community	104.2	102.6
3204062	George Mitchell Community School	Community	100.4	105.4

Percentage of 15 year old achieving five or more grades A-C*

DfES number	School name	Type of establishment	KS3-GCSE/ GNVQ VA measure 2002	KS3-GCSE/ GNVC VA measure 2003
3204064	Norlington School for Boys	Community	101.6	101.2
3204069	Leytonstone School	Community	101.6	100.8

Table 4: Post 16 results 2000—2003 in Leyton and Wanstead parliamentary constituency

School name	2002	2001	2000
Wanstead high school			
Average points per student for GCE and VCE results	237.6	—	—
Percentage of students achieving Intermediate VQ Qualification	80	—	—
Average points per student for combined A/AS/AGNV	—	14.3	—
Average points for fewer than 2 A/AS levels	—	—	3.7
Average points for 2 or more A/AS levels	—	—	14
Advanced GNVQs	—	—	10.5

Notes:

GCE A/AS examinations and advanced GNVQs

The basis for post 16 performances changed in 2001 and again in 2002.

The 2001 and 2002 performance results cannot therefore be compared to previous years.

2003 Post 16 Performance

The basis for post 16 performances for 2003 has changed and cannot therefore be compared to previous years.

However, Wanstead High School average point score at 215.9 average point score per pupil for GCE and VCE results is below both Redbridge LEA (249.0) and England averages (258.6).

Sector Skills Councils

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of Sector Skills Councils in addressing the skills gap. [177375]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: There has been significant progress in establishing the Skills for Business network of Sector Skills Councils with 18 councils now licensed or recommended for licence. The Sector Skills Development Agency has been working with the developing Skills for Business network to agree a performance monitoring and evaluation framework to evaluate its performance over time against its policy objectives. That framework is now in place.

The first phase of the evaluation is now complete. It has shown that Sector Skills Councils are making good progress in analysing the skills gap in each of their sectors. The evaluation has provided baseline performance information so that the effectiveness of SSCs and the broader network can be tracked over time. The evaluation has further provided early information on emerging good practice and continuous improvement which will help to assess future impact.

Sex Education

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent guidelines his Department has issued to schools on sex education. [177939]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Department provided sex and relationship education guidance to all maintained schools in July 2000.

Responsibility for determining sex and relationship education in schools rests with governing bodies and head teachers, having regard to the guidance.

Skills for Life Strategy

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the Skills for Life strategy. [177377]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: We are on track to meet our target of 750,000 adults with better basic skills by 2004 and will be reporting on progress towards this in the autumn. From April 2001 to July 2004, a projected 2.3 million learners will have taken up an estimated 4.6 million learning opportunities. We remain focused on achieving our PSA target of 1.5 million adults with better basic skills by 2007.

We continue to engage employers, public sector organisations and others in initiatives within the Skills for Life strategy. The Skilled for Health joint project with the Department of Health continues to help adults gain a better understanding of their own health as well as improving their basic skills. The Link Up project, co-funded with the Home Office, recruited 6,410 volunteers as Adult Learner Supporters. The Learning and Skills Council Skills for Life Quality Initiative has provided Leadership and Management Training to 1,310 staff, provided 1,200 people with funding for new teaching qualifications and trained 1,266 teachers in the basic skills Core Curriculum.

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether the Skills for Life strategy has met its target of 750,000 adults to achieve a national certificate by 2004. [177380]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: We are on track to meet our target of 750,000 adults with better basic skills by 2004 and will be reporting on progress towards this in the autumn. We remain focused on the achieving our PSA target of 1.5 million adults with better basic skills by 2007.

Unique Learner Number

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what a unique learner number is. [177944]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: My Department is exploring the idea of a unique learner number for every individual involved in lifelong learning. This would improve the flow of information between schools, further education and higher education. The aim being to simplify application processes and enable learning providers to improve the services they offer. We are considering the associated benefits, costs and privacy issues.

Universities and Colleges Admissions Service

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what checks are made by the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service to ensure that applications to university are not bogus. [178211]

Alan Johnson: The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) is the central agency through which applications for places at universities and colleges in the UK are processed. The Verification Unit was established in 1996 in order to raise awareness of

fraud within its constituent institutions and to introduce measures to combat fraud in the applications processing system. The Verification Unit is committed to a policy of ensuring that applications received through the UCAS, the Social Work Admissions System (SWAS), the Nursing Midwifery Admissions Service (NMAS) and the Graduate Teacher Training Registry (GTTR) are from genuine applicants seeking places in higher education.

Higher education institutions will also undertake their own verification checks before applicants are allowed to enrol.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 16 June 2004

TRANSPORT

Air Transport

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what resources will be available to National Air Traffic Services to ensure that it is able to carry out the airspace work in time to meet the Aviation White Paper's timetable for new runways at *(a)* Stansted, *(b)* Heathrow and *(c)* Birmingham; and what reports he has received of difficulties with National Air Traffic Services which might hinder this work; [178481]

(2) what further steps he will take to ensure the robustness of the air traffic control system in the light of the construction of the new runways envisaged by the Aviation White Paper. [178482]

Mr. McNulty: The Government are satisfied—and the National Audit Office has confirmed—that last year's re-financing of NATS has put the company on a robust financial footing and that it is able to make further vital investment to expand capacity to meet future growth. Work on the investment programme has re-started and NATS will invest some £1 billion in the national air traffic control system over the next 10 years.

I have received no reports of difficulties within the company that might hinder NATS in carrying out the airspace work envisaged for it in the Aviation White Paper. The skills and experience necessary to carry forward airspace and procedure design work in support of such initiatives are, however, highly specialised, and NATS and the BAA are currently scoping the extent of the additional work required. This will identify the specific expertise and resources required, and whether NATS will need to seek additional skills as a result of this work.

Central European Time

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent assessment has been made of potential change in the number of road traffic accidents as a result of moving to Central European Time. [178864]

Mr. Jamieson: The most recent is a Government commissioned report, by the Transport Research Laboratory, published in October 1988, which concluded that if the UK adopted Central European Time (CET) i.e. GMT + one hour in the winter from October to March and GMT + two hours in the summer from March to October, thereby making the evenings lighter, there could be a saving of over 100 deaths per year, and taken together with serious injuries, save well over 400 such casualties.

Correspondence

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the Minister for Roads will reply to the letter from Mrs. Mich Bingham of Cumberwell Drive. [179048]

Mr. Jamieson: There have been several letters from Mrs . Bingham, each of which were addressed to officials of the Highways Agency. All those received up to 8 June and requiring a response have been replied to.

Crime (Public Transport)

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many thefts were committed on *(a)* the railways and *(b)* buses in each year since 1997. [175453]

Mr. McNulty: The British Transport Police (BTP) have provided the following information on the number of recorded thefts on the railways within Great Britain since 1998; information is not readily available for earlier than 1998.

The offence of theft on the railway includes theft from the person, theft of personal property and theft of luggage. In April 2002 BTP adopted the National Crime Recording standard, which makes the reporting of crime more victim focused, and crime is assessed on the probability of such offences having taken place. A crime will be recorded if on the balance of probability: *(a)* the circumstances as reported amount to a crime defined by law and *(b)* there is no credible evidence to the contrary. The introduction of this standard accounts for a proportion of the rise between 2001–02 and 2002–03.

	Total number of thefts
1998–99	19,018
1999–2000	26,075
2000–01	23,670
2001–02	24,632
2002–03	32,035
2003–04	31,149

No data is held centrally regarding the number of thefts committed on buses. However, it is known that there were 254 robberies from bus crews in 2001 and 294 in 2002. The Safer Travel on Buses and Coaches Panel (STOP) has been established to look at ways to combat assaults, anti-social behaviour and vandalism at stops and stations and on vehicles and property. The Panel brings together those involved in dealing with the issue of safety and security, and includes operators, local authorities, police and unions. It is charged with the important task of facilitating the exchange of ideas and spreading best practice and is considering how the collection of accurate bus and coach crime data can be improved.

Cycling (Rochdale)

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of new cycle lanes have been provided using public funds in Rochdale since 1997.[178559]

Mr. McNulty: A total of 10 miles of new cycle lanes in Rochdale have been provided using public funds since 1997.

Driving Licences

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people were informed by the Driving and Vehicle Licensing Agency that they are required to resit their driving test because they failed to apply for a full licence within two years of passing their original test in each year since 1997. [177491]

Mr. Jamieson: Information is not collected showing the number of drivers who have failed to claim their full entitlement within two years and have needed to retake their driving test. The Agency has tackled this in varying ways, including the issuing of reminders to drivers with unclaimed entitlement and more recently by adjusting the fee structure to allow updated licences to be issued free of charge.

DVLA and DSA will introduce a scheme later this year to streamline the process and remove the problem of unclaimed test passes. In most cases, the system will allow the updated licence to be issued automatically following a successful test, without the need for a separate application.

Flight Time Limitations

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his letter reference MC/015200/03 of 25 September 2003, what his latest assessment is of the value of the Flight Time Limitations Requirements; and if he will make a statement. [177822]

Mr. McNulty: I refer my hon. Friend to my answer given to my hon. Friend the Member for Edinburgh, North and Leith (Mr. Lazarowicz) on 14 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 696–97W.

Intelligent Speed Adaption Systems

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what grants the Department has given to the research and development of Intelligent Speed Adaption Systems; and if he will make a statement. [177992]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department for Transport has not given any grants for the research and development of Intelligent Speed Adaptation (ISA) systems.

Research into ISA is being carried out as part of the Department's managed vehicle safety research programme. The project began in 2001 and is expected to conclude in the autumn of 2006 at a cost of £1,951,525. An advanced digital map supporting the on-road ISA trials is funded by a separate contract at a cost of £158,383.

The main aim of the current project is to study drivers' behavioural adaptation over time. A trial of 20 ISA equipped cars is currently under way in Leeds.

A further project supports the main research and the general development of ISA nationally and internationally by providing expert advice on an ad hoc basis.

The Government currently has no plans to make the use of intelligent speed limiters compulsory. We hope that industry will take up the technology in response to public demand.

Parking

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much income has been derived by local authorities from parking *(a)* charges and *(b)* penalties in each financial year since 1997–98 (i) in total and (ii) broken down by local authority; and what proportion was collected through penalty charge notices in each of these years. [177661]

Mr. McNulty: Separate statistics on income derived by local authorities from parking charges and penalties are not collected centrally. Total income and expenditure on parking by local authorities in England since 1997–98 is shown in the following table. I have arranged for tables giving a break down by authorities for each year to be placed in the Libraries of the House.

£000

	Total income	*Total expenditure net*	*Current expenditure*
1997–98	638,483	415,659	-222,824
1998–99	654,685	407,503	-247,183
1999–2000	725,184	438,277	-286,907
2000–01	782,210	465,921	-316,287
2001–02	861,152	518,453	-342,699
2002–03	966,350	586,101	-380,249

Pedestrian/Cyclist Accidents

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how many pedestrians were injured as a result of collisions between pedestrians and cyclists on footpaths and pavements in each of the past three years; [178773]

(2) what research his Department has undertaken into problems caused by cyclists using footpaths and pavements; [178774]

(3) what research his Department has undertaken into the concerns of older people about cyclists using footpaths and pavements; [178775]

(4) what guidance he has offered to police forces about *(a)* prevention of cyclists using footpaths and pavements and *(b)* steps to be taken against those cyclists who do use footpaths and pavements. [178777]

Mr. McNulty: The statistics on casualties in accidents between cyclist and pedestrian on a footway between 1999 and 2002 (the latest figures) are set out in the following table:

Casualties

Severity	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
Killed	1	0	0	0
Serious	25	17	16	14
Slight	61	48	38	37
All	87	65	54	51

Cycling on the pavement is an offence under section 72 of the Highways Act 1835 as amended by section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1888. Enforcement is a matter for the police. Guidance on matters relating to police enforcement is a matter for the Home Secretary and for individual Chief Constables to issue.

The police have powers to prosecute cyclists who cycle illegally on footpaths and footways. Cycling on the pavement can also be dealt with by Fixed Penalty Notice system (£30 fine). The police also have powers to prosecute cyclists riding carelessly or dangerously.

We have not undertaken specific research on the problems caused by cyclists using footpaths and pavements, or the related concerns of older people. The existence of such activity demonstrates a need to accommodate cyclists wishing to gain access to destinations currently served by pedestrian-only routes and we advise local authorities that they should first attempt to satisfy this demand by improving conditions for cyclists on the road network. Where this is impracticable, the solution is to formally change the status of footpaths or footways so that cyclists can legally use them. This decision is not taken lightly and such conversions often require physical changes to ensure the routes can operate safely. To this end, we have commissioned research which investigated the operation of routes formally intended for use by both cyclists and pedestrians. The purpose of this was to inform the preparation of updated advice to local authorities on this issue in the form of a revised Local Transport Note (LTN). We have also contributed to research conducted on behalf of the Countryside Agency which examined the level of interaction between these user groups on off-road routes. The latter showed that while the perception of conflict on these routes was significant, actual conflict was not. In producing the revised LTN, we are aiming to improve physical conditions on these routes and hence reduce the perceived level of conflict.

Ports (Security)

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether foreign vessels that have not complied with the International Ship and Port Facility Security code will be denied entry to British ports after the internationally agreed implementation date of 1 July; and if he will make a statement. [178731]

Mr. Jamieson: I refer my hon. Friend to my answer of 26 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 782W, to the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland (Mr. Carmichael).

Potters Bar Train Accident

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to make a decision on whether to hold a public inquiry into the Potters Bar train accident; and if he will make a statement on progress to date of the investigation. [177812]

Mr. McNulty: I understand that the Health and Safety Executive's investigation team is expected to report to the Investigation Board in September or October 2004. The relevant prosecuting authorities will then review all the evidence to determine whether criminal prosecutions should be commenced. When that has happened, the Secretary of State expects to be in a position to take the decision on whether or not to hold a public inquiry.

Railways (Crime)

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answers of 12 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 399W and 408W, on crime prevention and railway crimes, what method he used to calculate a fall of 32 per cent. in vandalism on the railways in 2002–03. [178072]

Mr. McNulty: The 32 per cent. reduction in vandalism on the railways in 2002–03 was calculated by the Rail Safety and Standards Board. This was based on the number of malicious acts on the Network Rail controlled infrastructure recorded by Railway Group members using the Safety Management Information System (SMIS). The percentage reduction was calculated by comparing the previous year's total for the number of malicious acts against the total for 2002–03.

Road Safety (Rochdale)

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the percentage change in *(a)* deaths and *(b)* serious injuries on roads in Rochdale has been since 1997; and what the percentage change was in each case regarding people of Asian origin. [178558]

Mr. Jamieson: The available information relates to local authority areas. In the Rochdale local authority area there were 16 deaths in road accidents in 1997 and 11 deaths in 2002, the latest year for which information is available. The number of serious injuries rose by 1 per cent. from 83 in 1997 to 84 in 2002.

Information on the ethnic origin of casualties in road accidents is not available.

Road Schemes

Mr. Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the road schemes *(a)* in the Targeted Programme of Improvements and *(b)* submitted for funding through the Local Transport Plan Process between 1999–2000 and 2002–03, giving for each (i) the cost of the scheme when it was first submitted for approval and (ii) the most recent estimate or final cost of the scheme. [176797]

Mr. Jamieson: The information requested has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses and is listed in the tables which have been split by (1) Targeted Programme of Improvement schemes and (2) local transport major road schemes.

Differences in scheme costs between first submission and most recent estimate can be due to differences in the basis on which costs have been calculated as well to underlying increases in-the cost estimate. As a result direct comparisons between these cost estimates may not be meaningful.

Travel Costs

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list in tabular form the relative changes since 1974 in the cost of *(a)* motoring, *(b)* travelling by bus and *(c)* travelling by train, measured against changes in average disposable income. [178706]

Mr. Jamieson: The following table shows the changes in the cost of transport and household disposable income. Indices are shown in real terms and based to 1974 = 100.

£

	All motoring[1]	*Rail*	*Bus*	*Household disposable income*
1974	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1975	104.4	109.2	104.9	101.2
1976	101.2	124.3	114.9	100.6
1977	99.9	125.0	114.1	98.6
1978	99.7	132.0	119.4	105.8
1979	104.0	128.8	118.4	112.0
1980	103.8	135.6	127.0	114.0
1981	103.9	138.6	125.6	113.4
1982	101.0	146.5	133.3	113.0
1983	103.2	148.5	134.7	115.4
1984	100.7	142.0	131.1	119.6
1985	99.4	142.4	128.9	123.8
1986	94.7	147.0	135.2	128.9
1987	96.3	148.4	137.4	133.5
1988	95.9	151.3	140.1	140.9
1989	93.9	153.2	140.2	147.5
1990	91.0	152.2	135.1	152.7
1991	92.3	158.8	145.5	155.7
1992	95.0	164.2	150.2	160.1
1993	97.6	173.0	154.3	164.5
1994	98.5	176.3	154.6	166.9
1995	97.0	178.1	155.0	170.7
1996	97.5	180.3	156.9	174.9
1997	99.6	178.9	157.6	182.2
1998	99.3	180.1	157.3	182.8
1999	100.2	183.8	160.6	188.6
2000	101.0	181.6	162.3	200.4
2001	98.7	185.3	166.1	209.6
2002	96.3	186.5	168.5	213.2
2003	94.8	184.3	170.6	218.2

[1] 'All motoring' includes the cost of purchase, maintenance, fuel, tax and insurance.

Source:

Retail Price Index and National Accounts, Office for National Statistics.

DEFENCE

BAE Systems

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when *(a)* he and *(b)* the Permanent Secretary of his Department first became aware of allegations that a member of the Saudi armed forces project of the Ministry of Defence was provided with free holidays and gifts by BAE Systems between 2000 and 2002. [176053]

Mr. Hoon: The Permanent Secretary was made aware of the allegations on 5 April 2004 and the issue was brought to my attention later that month.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for what reasons the Permanent Secretary in his Department decided that no investigation was required after he received a letter from the then director of the Serious Fraud Office on 8 March 2001 regarding allegations of fraud involving BAE Systems; and if he will make a statement. [176068]

Mr. Hoon: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Minister for the Armed Forces (Mr. Ingram) on 3 November 2003, *Official Report*, column 429W, to my hon. Friend the Member for Leyton and Wanstead (Harry Cohen) and to the hon. Member for North Norfolk (Norman Lamb).

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on what date *(a)* he, *(b)* Ministers in his Department and *(c)* the Permanent Secretary in his Department held discussions with Sir Richard Evans, the chairman of BAE Systems, on the provision of free holidays and gifts by BAE Systems between 2000 and 2002 to a civil servant in the Saudi armed forces project of the Ministry of Defence; and if he will make a statement. [176072]

Mr. Hoon: There have been no discussions with Sir Richard Evans on the allegations of misconduct involving a former, but now retired member of the Saudi armed forces project. The allegations are properly under investigation by the Ministry of Defence Police, and the MOD and we will consider what further action is necessary if any once the results of this investigation are available.

Departmental Expenditure (Entertainment)

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his latest estimate is of the amount spent by his Department on entertainment in each year from 1996–97 to 2004–05. [169002]

Mr. Caplin: Details of cash expenditure on entertainment by the Ministry of Defence in each year from 1996–97 to 2001–02 were provided in the answer I gave the hon. Member on 20 March 2003, *Official Report*, column 885W. Final outturn on a resource basis, which is not directly comparable with previous cash figures, for 2002–03 was £7.32 million. The provisional outturn for FY 2003–04 is £7.99 million. Expenditure on entertainment and hospitality will vary for a number of reasons, but has been rising in line with the Strategic Defence Review intention to increase engagement with other countries through defence diplomacy, aimed at preventing conflict and increasing international stability. Planned expenditure for this financial year, after allowing for the effect of inflation, is expected to be the same, or lower, than the outturn in FY 2003–04.

Expenditure incurred on entertainment is strictly for official purposes only, and is made in accordance with departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on principles set out in Government Accounting.

Faslane

Mr. Sayeed: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence why secondary monitoring for all those leaving nuclear submarines is not mandatory at HM Naval Base Clyde Faslane. [178868]

Mr. Ingram: Comprehensive arrangements, which comply fully with legal requirements and have been approved by the Health and Safety Executive's Nuclear Installations Inspectorate, are in place to ensure the safety of all personnel working on nuclear submarines. Personnel exiting the reactor compartments must be monitored before they are permitted to leave the submarine (by suitably qualified and experienced workers) using hand-held instrumentation capable of detecting very low levels of radioactive contamination. This monitoring is precautionary as work procedures and protective clothing are designed to minimise the

chance of becoming contaminated. Secondary monitoring (using a walk-through monitor), which takes place after the worker has completed primary monitoring and removed his protective clothing, is compulsory when contamination is suspected or found.

Iraq

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the oral statement of the Minister of State of 4 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1211, if he will make a further statement to the House on the Special Investigation Branch inquiries into alleged abuse of Iraqi civilians. [177587]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the written statement I made on 8 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 4–5WS.

Since then it has been announced in another place that one case, involving four soldiers, will be brought to trial. A further case is now pending a decision on prosecution.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his statement of 8 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 4–5WS, on Iraq, what the names are of the individuals whose deaths are among the cases where a decision whether to prosecute is pending. [179031]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 15 June 2004]:* In my statement of 8 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 4–5WS, I referred to seven cases pending a decision to prosecute on 4 May. Since then a further case has come under consideration as referred to by my noble and learned Friend the Attorney-General in a statement in another place on 15 June. Of the eight cases now under consideration, five cases involve deaths. The names of the individuals are: Hassam Abbad Saied, Baha Musa, Zaher Sabti Zaher, Ali Salaam and Nadhem Abdullah.

Trident Replacement

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what design studies have been commissioned to find a replacement for Trident nuclear submarines. [179006]

Mr. Hoon: As set out in paragraph 3.11 of the 2003 Defence White Paper (Cm 6041–1), decisions on whether to replace Trident are likely to be needed in the next Parliament. In the meantime, we will continue to take appropriate steps to ensure that the range of options for maintaining a nuclear deterrent capability is kept open until that decision point. This will include appropriate design studies.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many employees in his Department have *(a)* signed a formal opt out from and *(b)* are exempt from the Working Time Directive; and how many employees in his Department have recorded hours, including any accruing on a flexitime basis, in excess of the maximum allowed under the Working Time Directive in the last month for which figures are available. [178366]

Mr. Caplin: I will write to my hon. Friend and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Admissions/appeals

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, if he will list, for each English local education authority, in each of the last five years, the costs of the administration of *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary school (i) admissions and (ii) appeals. [177607]

Mr. Miliband: The Department does not collect this information. The administration of school admissions and admission appeals is the responsibility of individual admission authorities. LEAs must delegate funding for the administration of admissions and admission appeals to governing bodies of schools that are admission authorities or carry out the administration on their behalf.

Broadband

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the disadvantages to students whose schools do not have access to broadband services. [178928]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department is well on the way to achieving the ambitious Government target of making broadband available to over 23,000 schools in England by 2006. This is a substantial and complex task.

Excellent progress has been made during the last two and a half years. As at March 2004, 60 per cent. of schools (98 per cent. of secondary schools and 53 per cent. of primary schools) have access to broadband. We are on schedule to connect the remainder by 2006 as planned.

In the meantime, those schools that don't yet have broadband have access to a narrower, but still significant, range of resources and collaborative opportunities through standard Internet connections. They also have access to off-line multimedia resources as can be found on Curriculum Online and funded using eLearning Credits. We are supporting teachers in the use of such resources through the National Strategies.

We are encouraging schools not scheduled to be upgraded to broadband until towards the end of 2006, and which have expensive ISDN connections, to adopt more cost-effective, interim solutions.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what mechanism his Department has put in place to monitor the roll-out of broadband to schools. [178929]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department works with the 10 Regional Broadband Consortia (RBCs) to procure and roll out broadband connections to schools. Becta (the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency) collects LEA broadband connectivity statistics, supplied by the RBCs, which are compiled and released on a quarterly basis.

As at March 2004, 60 per cent. of schools (98 per cent. of secondary schools and 53 per cent. of primary schools) have access to broadband. The Government's target is to connect all schools to broadband by 2006.

Correspondence

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what action he proposes to take in response to the letter to him by Mr. John Wright, of the Independent Panel for Special Education Advice, of 6 February. [177437]

Margaret Hodge: The Department wrote to Mr. Wight on 17 February confirming that the complaints against five local education authorities made in his letter would be taken up individually with each of the authorities concerned. The Department wrote to Mr. Wright again on 30 March, having concluded its investigations of East Sussex local education authority, to confirm that the complaint against the Authority had not been upheld. Further information is awaited from the remaining authorities to enable the Secretary of State to reach decisions on the outstanding cases. We expect to receive this shortly.

Food Technology

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to reform the food technology curriculum taught in schools; and if he will make a statement. [177646]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: We are working with colleagues across Government to tackle key health issues, including bringing together all aspects of food education, such as nutrition, diet, cooking, food hygiene and safety for pupils of all ages. Food education is taught through science, food technology, and Personal, Social and Health Education and we will consider any curriculum implications in the light of our cross government work on this important area.

Learning and Skills Council

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discussions his Department has had with the Learning and Skills Council on the recently issued guidelines to limit college franchising arrangements with work-based learning providers; what steps he is taking to ensure that the provision of high quality training is safeguarded; and if he will take steps to ensure the early substitution of direct contracting between local learning and skills councils and the affected providers. [178232]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 14 June 2004]:* My officials have not had detailed discussions with the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) about the guidelines to local LSCs concerning the funding of franchised further education provision. The LSC is responsible for establishing and developing a robust and diverse network of providers to meet the needs of communities, learners and employers. My ministerial colleagues and I, with the support of officials, ensure the LSC carries out its responsibilities through regular meetings, reporting and review arrangements. As contracting decisions are the operational responsibility of the LSC, Mark Haysom, the LSC's Chief Executive, will write to my hon. Friend detailing the arrangements adopted to ensure changes to franchised activity are handled smoothly.

Tuition Fees

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what representations the Government have received from students in year 12 and their parents planning to take a gap year who will pay tuition fees if they secure deferred places at universities; and if he will make a statement. [178903]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 14 June 2004]:* My right hon. Friend has received a number of representations from students, their parents and others about the tuition fees to be paid by students who choose to defer their entry from 2005 to 2006.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Planning Decisions

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which planning decisions were overturned by his Department in *(a)* 2001, *(b)* 2002 and *(c)* 2003; and which of these concerned development on brownfield sites. [178532]

Keith Hill: The table details the number of recovered appeals allowed by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and its predecessor department in 2001, 2002 and 2003, and the number of these which concerned development on brownfield sites.

Type of development	*Number of recovered appeals allowed*	*Number on brownfield sites*
Appeals allowed in 2001		
Retail	5	4
Residential	9	7
Vehicular Access	1	1
Offices	2	0
Minerals	2	0
Footbridge	1	1
Waste incinerator	1	1
Gypsy/showmen site	4	1
Listed Building	6	n/a
Other	1	0
Totals	32	15
Appeals allowed in 2002		
Retail	1	1
Residential	7	5
Hospital	1	0
Offices	1	0
Wind turbine	1	1
Rail freight terminal	1	1
Waste disposal	1	1
Gypsy/showmen site	2	0
Water booster station	1	0
Listed building	4	n/a
Totals	20	9
Appeals allowed in 2003		
Residential	12	4
Offices	1	0
Minerals	1	0
Footbridge	1	1
Gypsy/showmen site	18	0
Warehousing	1	0
Laboratory	1	1
Menage	2	0
Aircraft hanger	1	0
Educational	2	0
Subway	1	1
Electricity substation	1	0
Agricultural development	1	0
Gas regulator	1	0
Listed building	14	n/a

Type of development	Number of recovered appeals allowed	Number on brownfield sites
Other	2	2
Totals	60	9

Figures for 2001, 2002 and 2003 concerning transferred appeals allowed by Inspectors, on behalf of the Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister are tabled as follows. Information on which of these developments were on brownfield land is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

	Number of transferred appeals allowed	As a percentage of total appeals
2001	4,535	36
2002	5,115	37
2003	6,015	33.5

Postal Voting

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the process is for reimbursing local authorities for the extra costs of conducting all-postal pilots in the June 2004 elections. [176249]

Mr. Raynsford: The process is set out in Schedule 3 of the European Parliamentary and Local Elections (All Postal) Pilots Order. Regional and local returning officers will be able to claim reimbursement for services properly rendered, or expenses properly incurred, for or in connection with the European election by submitting an account to my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister within six months of the election. Insofar as the local elections in principal areas or parishes within the pilot regions are concerned, returning officers will be able to claim "local election pilot expenditure" from my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister. That will include any expenditure which is apportioned to the local election under section 15(4) of the 1985 Act, which exceeds the expenditure which he would have incurred if the electoral region within which the election (and any election the poll at which is combined with that election) is held had not been specified in section 1(3) of the 2004 Act i.e. had not been one of the pilot regions.

Returning officers may claim advance payments prior to the election. In these cases, the balance is settled after the election when the final costs are submitted.

Second Homes

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on his plans for an interim permanent residence policy affecting the purchase of second homes. [178606]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister recognises the need for affordable homes for local residents in supporting balanced and sustainable communities. It is not part of our policy to address this need by removing the basic right of willing sellers and willing buyers to sell and buy property.

SCOTLAND

Departmental Staff

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many people have left employment in his Department because of *(a)* anxiety, *(b)* stress, *(c)* depression and *(d)* other mental health reasons in each year since 1997. [175672]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office was established on 1 July 1999.

No staff have left employment in the Office because of anxiety, stress, depression or other mental health reasons.

Early Retirement

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many employees in his Department took early retirement in the last financial year; and at what total cost. [171730]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office incurred no costs in relation to early retirements in 2003–04. All staff in the Office are on loan from other Government Departments or other bodies, who remain their employers.

Secondments

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many staff in his Department and its agencies were seconded from the *(a)* private and *(b)* academic sector in each of the last three years. [174824]

Mrs. McGuire: Two staff joined the Scotland Office on secondment from the private sector in 2002–03. No staff have been seconded from the academic sector.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Fixed Penalty Notices

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on how many occasions Merseyside local authorities have issued a fixed penalty notice for noise disturbance in each year since 1996. [178326]

Alun Michael: Merseyside local authorities have not issued any fixed penalty notices for noise disturbance since 1996.

Animal Movements

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) if she will make a statement about hauliers picking up animals in multi pick-up and drop-off sites; [178448]

(2) how many multiple *(a)* pick-up and *(b)* drop-off licences have been issued in each of the last three years; what period they cover; how many have been renewed in each year; and if she will review the need to continue issuing these licences;. [178451]

(3) if she will make a statement as to how hauliers can find out whether the farmers for whom they pick up and drop off animals hold the required licence; and what provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 apply in these circumstances. [178452]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answers 14 June 2004]:* Any livestock vehicle taking livestock on to a farm and then off again as part of a multiple pick-up or drop-off movement risks spreading disease, either to the animals if disease is present on the farm, or to animals on the farm if disease is present in the animals on the vehicle.

Each farm wishing to bring stock on as part of a multiple drop-off or to move stock off as part of a multiple pick-up is required to do so only from an approved point on the farm premises. The approved point has to meet standards designed to minimise the spread of disease.

Approvals are not time limited; they remain in force until such time as the approved point ceases to meet the standards set. All approved points are approved both for multiple pick-ups and multiple drop-offs. As at 9 June 2004, there were 14,313 approved multiple pick-up and drop-off points in England and Wales.

Given the need for continued biosecurity measures to reduce the risk of disease there are no proposals to amend the requirement that multiple pick-ups and drop-offs take place only from approved points.

There are two approved methods for loading or unloading stock, one of which involves the use of trailers. These are set out in detail in each of the General Licences for the movement of livestock, and are available on the Department's website at www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/movements/sheep/sheep-annexesa-c.pdf

It is for each haulier to satisfy himself that the points to which livestock is being delivered in a multiple drop-off, or from which they are collected in a multiple pick-up, are approved for the purpose. This might be done by checking with the keeper of the livestock at the time of agreeing the haulage contract. For these reasons, there are no data protection issues for this Department. My officials would be pleased to consider with the haulage industry how this information might be made more widely available.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) how many hauliers have been prosecuted for picking up animals from farms in a multi pick-up vehicle without a licence approved by her Department; and if she will make a statement; [178449]

(2) how many drivers employed by hauling companies have been prosecuted in each of the last three years for failing to adhere to the requirements relating to multiple pick-up licences. [178450]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answers 14 June 2004]:* Vehicles do not require a licence from this Department before being used in multiple pick-ups of livestock. Any prosecution relating to failure to comply with the provisions relating to multiple pick-ups or drop-offs is a matter for the local authority.

Information on the number of prosecutions of hauliers for failing to observe the livestock movement provisions relating to multiple pick-ups and multiple drop-offs has been held centrally only since February 2004, since when five prosecutions have been brought. However, this Department has been made aware of five prosecutions of hauliers for offences involving multiple pick-ups or multiple drop-offs in the period between October 2003 and February 2004.

This Department does not hold information as to whether the person prosecuted was the driver of the vehicle concerned.

Bathing Water Quality

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the bathing water quality statistics were for beaches in the UK in each of the last 20 years, broken down by region. [178428]

Mr. Morley: Comparable bathing water quality statistics for beaches are only available from 1987 after the number of bathing waters within the scope of the EC bathing water directive was substantially increased. Percentage compliance with the directive's main microbiological standards was as follows:

Percentage

	England	*Scotland*	*Wales*	*Northern Ireland*
1987	56	65	57	64
1988	65	52	77	88
1989	75	70	83	100
1990	79	52	70	94
1991	74	65	88	100
1992	79	65	76	94
1993	79	78	82	94
1994	83	70	76	94
1995	89	83	88	94
1996	89	91	91	100
1997	88	78	94	88
1998	90	52	94	94
1999	90	88	99	100
2000	94	85	99	100
2001	98	85	93	81
2002	99	92	100	94
2003	99	95	99	100

A more detailed summary of bathing water quality statistics has been produced every year since 1986 and placed in the Library.

Bovine Brain Diseases

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on recent deaths of cattle from unidentified viral brain diseases. [178674]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 14 June 2004]:* Following a post-mortem examination of a suspect case of botulism in a Holstein yearling heifer in September 2003 on a farm in Cumbria, the Veterinary Laboratory Agency (VA) identified a viral-type encephalomyelitis on histological examination. Examination for the most common neurotropic viruses in the UK proved negative. It was decided that veterinary practitioners

should be informed by a letter to the Veterinary Record that suspect botulism cases in cattle might be viral in origin. As background for the letter an examination of VLA records with similar histological findings was carried out. This revealed 21 similar cases of polioencephalomyelitis in cattle and sheep (20 ovine 1 bovine) but with different clinical presentations from 13 premises in England over the past 10 years. The Cumbrian case was reported to the UK Zoonoses Group (UKZG) which considers possible public health action with regard to existing and emerging zoonotic infections. The UKZG suggested that the Health Protection Agency (HPA) be asked to use its recently developed risk assessment algorithm to assess public health implications once more information on the case has been collated. In the light of this decision and the 21 other cases Defra has now asked the HPA to lead a risk assessment to human health on the new condition.

Ceramics Industry

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will urgently provide to the ceramic industry the data on individual installation carbon dioxide allocations needed to assist them in their decisions on Phase I of the European Emissions Trading Scheme. [177453]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* In the National Allocation Plan published on 6 May 2004, we explained to stakeholders that installation-level allocations would be made available in late July/early August, once we have had an opportunity to incorporate comments received during the recent consultation. However, in response to a direct request from the European Commission, the UK has provided additional information relating to its NAP, including a list of provisional installation-level allocations to the Commission. This information has been provided to allow the UK NAP to be considered with the first group of NAPs later in the summer and so assist the Commission in adopting a rigorous approach when scrutinising other member state's NAPs.

This list of provisional installation level allocations has been prepared on the basis of information available at the time of submission. We have explained to the Commission that the allocations are likely to be subject to technical revision following the outcome of our consultation exercise.

Cremation

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to reduce the emissions of mercury from crematorium chimneys; and if she will make it her policy to ensure that the emission of mercury from cremation ceases at an early date. [178669]

Alun Michael: The Department consulted on a review of the technical issues relating to emissions of mercury from crematoria in May 2003 and published a summary of responses and initial conclusions in November 2003. These can be found at http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/crematoria/index.htm. We propose to issue a further consultation paper containing proposals to address mercury emissions from crematoria shortly.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much mercury is estimated to have been released into the atmosphere in the UK each year as a result of cremating mortal remains containing mercury-based tooth fillings since *(a)* 1979 and *(b)* 1997; what assessment she has made of the environmental impact from these releases; and if she will make a statement. [178705]

Alun Michael: Based on monitoring and expert advice, the amount of mercury emitted per cremation ranges between 0.9 g and 3 g. We are currently attempting to achieve more precision, but based on these figures, total UK mercury emissions from crematoria in 2002 will have been between 0.4 and 1.34 tonnes. We do not have estimates for other years: the mercury content might have varied according to the differences in the dental situation of those cremated, and account would have to be taken of any changes in the numbers of cremations.

Total UK mercury emissions have declined from 44.9 tonnes in 1970 to 8.8 tonnes in 2000. The Department consulted on a review of the technical issues relating to emissions of mercury from crematoria in May 2003 and published a summary of responses and initial conclusions in November 2003. These can be found at http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/crematoria/index.htm. We propose to issue a further consultation paper containing proposals to address mercury emissions from crematoria shortly.

EC Water Framework Directive

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to integrate the delivery of biodiversity action plans into river basin management plans under the EC Water Framework Directive. [176916]

Mr. Morley: Demonstrating how biodiversity targets can be integrated into river basin management has been allocated top priority for the Water and Wetlands implementation programme of the England Biodiversity Strategy. The Environment Agency and English Nature will shortly be commisioning a project to take this work forward, with results scheduled for March 2005. The River Ribble will be used as a test-bed for the work, reflecting its role as a pilot catchment for public participation aspects of the Water Framework Directive.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to draw up a register of existing and potential wetlands to help meet the requirements of the EC Water Framework Directive. [176917]

Mr. Morley: The Water Framework Directive requires that a register of protected areas is drawn up to help determine management of water bodies. This register will include protected wildlife sites of wetland character such as those designated as Special Protection Areas (SPAs) under the Birds Directive and candidate Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) under the Habitats Directive. The Environment Agency, in its role as competent authority for the Water Framework Directive, English Nature and others are actively exploring ways of how best to incorporate wetlands into

integrated river basin planning and management. The River Ribble catchment is being used to test such an approach, which if successful, could be applied more widely in due course.

EU Emissions Trading Scheme

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether radioactive forcing will be taken into account in plans to incorporate aviation within the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. [177953]

Mr. Morley: I assume that the hon. Member intended to ask about radiative forcing.

It is the Government's intention to address the radiative forcing of aviation in fulfilling its Air Transport White Paper commitment to ensure that the aviation industry takes account of, and where appropriate reduces, its contribution to global warming. A decision on how the radiative forcing of aviation should be taken into account when designing the sector's participation in the EU Emissions Trading Scheme has yet to be made. Our adopted approach on this issue will reflect the need for consensus within the EU.

Fallen Stock

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) if she will list *(a)* hunt kennels, *(b)* knacker's yards, *(c)* renderers, *(d)* maggot farmers and *(e)* others approved to collect fallen stock under the EU Animal By-Products Regulations; [176296]

(2) how many *(a)* hunt kennels, *(b)* knacker's yards and *(c)* renderers are approved under the EU Animal By-Products Regulations to collect and process fallen stock in each county in England; [176301]

(3) how many constituencies in England have no approved fallen stock collector based within its boundaries. [176302]

Mr. Bradshaw: Although information regarding the location of fallen stock collection and disposal premises is available, this is not kept in a format which would allow their relationship to county and constituency boundaries to be ascertained However, the State Veterinary Service is currently working on a national Geographic Information System database which will, on completion, be capable of providing such information.

To allow premises to continue operating whilst individual inspections for approval were being carried out by the State Veterinary Service (SVS), animal by-product premises, including hunt kennels, knackers yards and rendering plants are subject to a series of general approvals.

The general approvals do not apply to premises which have been granted or refused an individual approval under these Regulations since 1 July 2003. For other premises the general approvals cease to apply either when the premises are inspected and an approval is either granted or refused, or on 1 August 2004, whichever is the earlier.

Prior to the Animal By-Products Regulations 2003, which came into force on 1 July 2003, Knackers' Yards required approval under the Animal By-Products Order 1999.

Hunt kennels, zoos and maggot farms required registration under the Order.

In June 2003, before the Animal By-Products Order was revoked, there were 63 approved knackers' yards, 34 registered maggot farms, 90 registered zoos/circuses and 294 registered hunt kennels—not all hunt kennels collect and/or dispose of fallen stock.

As of 1 April 2004, 13 rendering plants are approved under the Animal By-Products Regulations to process fallen stock. These are listed at Annex 1.

My officials have arranged for a list of those premises which were approved or registered, prior to 1 July 2003, by the Department to collect/dispose of animal by-products such as fallen stock, to be placed in the Library of the House. This list will be amended as and when premises are either granted or refused individual approvals under the EU Regulation.

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of hunt kennels *(a)* charge for provision of a fallen stock service and *(b)* provide a fallen stock service free of charge to the livestock farming industry. [176297]

Mr. Bradshaw: This information is not available to the Department, although we are aware that a number of hunt kennels may provide a free service, normally disposal of calves which die on farm, in return for farmers allowing hunts to use their land.

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the oral answer of 20 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1079–80, on fallen stock, what evidence her Department has received to support the statement that the role of hunt kennels in collecting fallen stock is small. [176303]

Mr. Bradshaw: Many hunt kennels traditionally dispose of calves, which are the most suitable livestock for feeding to hounds, although some may take small numbers of horses, sheep and other livestock. As hunt kennels do not operate in all areas of the UK and calves are estimated to form only a small percentage of the overall quantity of fallen stock that requires disposal the role of hunt kennels in collecting and disposing of fallen stock under the National Scheme is likely to be small.

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the postal address for the National Fallen Stock Company is. [176307]

Mr. Bradshaw: The postal address is the registered office for the Company which is the National Fallen Stock Company Ltd., c/o Saffery Champness, Stuart House, City Road, Peterborough, Cambs, PE1 1QF.

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the oral answer of 20 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1080, on fallen stock, what evidence she has received from the Chairman of the National Fallen Stock Company in support of his assurance that a ban on hunting would have no impact on the industry's capacity to dispose of fallen stock. [176308]

Mr. Bradshaw: In discussions that my Department has had with the Chairman, he has stated that in the Company's consultation with the knacker and rendering industries it was made clear that they have the capacity to deal with additional quantities of fallen stock likely to arise under the National Fallen Stock Scheme. It is true that the Company has registered a substantial level of interest in the Scheme from hunt kennels. Although they will be permitted to continue their current practice of feeding material to hounds, their presence in the Scheme will otherwise be on the basis that they have made the necessary investment to operate in a similar way to knackers yards for the collection and disposal of fallen stock.

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many carcases were collected by *(a)* hunt kennels, *(b)* knackers yards, *(c)* renderers, *(d)* maggot farmers and *(e)* others in (i) 2002 and (ii) 2003. [176309]

Mr. Bradshaw: This information is not held by the Department.

Focus Groups

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her estimate is of total expenditure by her Department on *(a)* focus groups and *(b)* opinion polls in each year from 1995–96 to 2003–04; and if she will make a statement. [162760]

Alun Michael: The Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs came into being in June 2001 and information, prior to that period, could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

While information is not held in the format requested, centrally-held records show that we have spent in the region of £345,000 on external market research and focus group research since Defra's creation in June 2001.

Fur Farming

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on what date she expects compensation to former fur farmers to *(a)* begin and *(b)* be completed. [178287]

Mr. Bradshaw: We are currently consulting on a draft Order that will enable us to set up the new compensation scheme. The Order sets out a timescale for payment. We expect to have made the majority of compensation payments by the end of the year.

General Agreement on Trade in Services (Drinking Water)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the Department for Trade and Industry regarding the exclusion of drinking water from the General Agreement on Trade in Services. [168019]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 27 April 2004]:* The Department has been fully consulted by the Department for Trade and Industry at all stages of the GATS negotiations in the World Trade Organisation (WTO), including the EU draft offer and requests on services.

The GATS negotiations are conducted on a request and offer basis, in which one WTO Member makes a request and the requested Member considers how to respond. Requests are no more than that. A country to whom a request has been addressed is not obliged to meet the request, whether fully, partially or even at all. Therefore it is entirely up to an individual member as to whether they include drinking water in their GATS offer.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to announce emissions reductions targets for greenhouse gases other than carbon dioxide; and if she will make a statement. [177952]

Mr. Morley: The UK has a target under the Kyoto Protocol to reduce emissions of a basket of six greenhouse gases by 12.5 per cent. below 1990 levels by 2008–12. The six gases covered by the Kyoto Protocol are carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons and sulphur hexafluoride.

The Government has also set itself a domestic goal of moving towards a 20 per cent. reduction in carbon dioxide emissions below 1990 levels by 2010 and is putting the UK on a path to a 60 per cent. reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by 2050.

The Government has no current plans to set itself targets to reduce emissions of other greenhouse gases. The UK's domestic goals focus on carbon dioxide, as it is the most important greenhouse gas in the UK, accounting for 85 per cent. of the direct global warming potential of emissions in 2002. Although we have not set a target beyond 2008–12 for non-CO_2 greenhouse gases, we will continue with our efforts to reduce emissions of all greenhouse gases.

Bovine TB

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research she has evaluated on the Irish bovine TB experiment. [177961]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Republic of Ireland Department of Agriculture has not yet published scientific papers on the findings a four-year badger culling trial (the "Four Area" Trial). The trial involves eliminating badgers over large areas to ascertain the effect on the incidence of bovine TB.

We will look closely at the Irish results once published to establish what we can learn and apply to the situation in Great Britain.

Squirrels

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the geographical incidence of grey squirrels in England; and what data is held by her Department on the spread of populations of grey squirrels since the species' introduction. [178082]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 10 June 2004]:* The first documented release of grey squirrels into the UK was in 1876 in Cheshire, with subsequent introduction to sites ranging from Glamorgan to Kent totalling more than 350 individuals. Grey squirrels are now present in every English county and absent only from parts of Cumbria and Northumberland, a small area of the Sefton coast, the Isle of Wight and Poole harbour islands.

Numbers of grey squirrels fluctuate considerably between years. However, the population was estimated at 2.5 million in the 1990s and it is likely to have increased since then as their range has expanded. Through the Tracking Mammals Partnership, funding has been secured from both Joint Nature Conservation Committee and Peoples' Trust for Endangered Species for a scoping study to investigate monitoring strategies for squirrels to address these issues.

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effect of grey squirrels on indigenous flora and fauna; and what recent research studies into the ecological effects of grey squirrels her Department has carried out. [178083]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 10 June 2004]:* The impact of the introduced grey squirrel on the native red squirrel is well known. Since the beginning of the 20th century, the spread of the grey has been closely linked with the decline and disappearance of the red squirrel from most of England. Although the two species may co-exist in some areas for many years, it seems that sooner or later the greys will dominate and the reds disappear. The exact mechanism for this replacement is not entirely clear; some recent work confirms the importance of interspecific competition, but a disease, parapox virus, which is harmless to greys but fatal to reds, may also be involved.

Squirrel presence surveys carried out by the Forestry Commission since the 1950s recorded the presence of bark stripping damage to individual tree species in woodlands. During 2000 a survey of private and state owned woodlands within the distribution range of grey squirrels in Great Britain further investigated damage levels by recording damage severity. Current studies are investigating the effect of grey squirrel bark stripping damage to oak in terms of tree growth rates.

The review "Possible effects of grey squirrels on birds and other wildlife", published in *British Wildlife* in February 2004, reviewed evidence of predation by squirrels on birds' eggs and nestlings, potential competition with birds for nest sites and food and competition with native mammals. Possible effects on woodland structure through their bark stripping activities and as a predator of tree seeds and bulbs were also considered.

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effect of grey squirrels on the geographical incidence of the indigenous red squirrel population in England. [178084]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 10 June 2004]:* Historical data show red squirrels to have been ubiquitous throughout England until the 1920s. Since the grey squirrel was released in the late 19th and early 20th century and their subsequent spread, the red squirrel has suffered a concurrent range contraction.

The red squirrel seems to have made some small gains in the Yorkshire Dales, where it has been able to expand into plantations that are now maturing and producing good crops of the pine cones that it needs.

The continuing expansion of the grey squirrel is to be expected and red squirrel conservation is focused on limiting that expansion in areas where the two species overlap. Some significant progress has been made in developing more effective and targeted ways of defending healthy populations of red squirrels against replacement by the grey squirrel.

Whales

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will support the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) sponsored project to study the behaviour of whales in the sea off the West Coast of Iceland; and if she will make representations to the Icelandic Government to persuade them to accede to IFAW's request to undertake this research. [178797]

Mr. Bradshaw: The request by the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) to the Government of Iceland for permission to study the behaviour of whales in the sea off the West Coast of Iceland was made through our embassy at Reykjavik. Our ambassador has since raised the application in contacts at senior level at both the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Office of the Prime Minister. The Government of Iceland can be in no doubt of Her Majesty's Government's full support for this request and the aims and objectives of the IFAW sponsored project. We will continue to press for a favourable response.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Lenient Sentencing

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Solicitor-General how many cases, where the sentence was judged to be unduly lenient were referred, *(a)* Crown Prosecution Service HQ Directorate, *(b)* Treasury Counsel and *(c)* to the Legal Secretariat of the Law Offices and to himself, in each of the last three years; how many cases were accepted by her for review by the Court of Appeal and how many were rejected; and in how many cases the Court of Appeal accepted that the sentence was unduly lenient and (i) increased the sentence and (ii) did not increase the sentence. [168819]

The Solicitor-General: Set out in the following table are details of the data held by the CPS Casework Directorate and the Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers which represent figures for the last three calendar years. The figures in line one represent the total defendants whose sentences were referred to Casework Directorate. The figures in line two onward represent the total defendants whose sentences were referred to LSLO by the CPS and by other prosecuting agencies. Figures are not kept regarding whether cases were referred to Treasury Counsel for advice.

	2001	2002	2003
Total defendants whose sentences were referred to Casework Directorate	287	375	323
Total defendants whose sentences were referred to the Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers	277	340	316
Total defendants whose sentences were considered by the Law Officers	234	290	272
Total defendants whose sentence was referred to the Court of Appeal	149	134	97
Total defendants where Court of Appeal refused leave	8	2	2
Total defendants where leave given but Court of Appeal held sentence not unduly lenient	12	17	[1]3
Total defendants where sentence held unduly lenient by Court of Appeal	129	115	[1]60
Total defendants where sentence held unduly lenient and sentence increased	97	91	[1]53
Total defendants where sentence held unduly lenient and sentence not increased	32	24	[1]7

[1] To date

Potters Bar Rail Crash

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Solicitor-General if she will make a statement on the work to date of the Crown Prosecution Service in respect of the Potters Bar Rail accident; and what further work she envisages the CPS undertaking. [177811]

The Solicitor-General: A joint investigation by the British Transport Police and the Health and Safety Executive into the causes of the rail accident began immediately after the derailment on 10 May 2002. The police led this investigation due to a suspicion that a serious criminal offence caused the deaths, and between June 2002 and March 2004 the Crown Prosecution Service worked closely with the police advising them on the evidence submitted and to be obtained.

In March 2004, the lead in the investigation transferred to Health and Safety Executive investigators, as no evidence of a deliberate criminal act or gross negligence causing the deaths had been established against any individual. The emphasis of the investigation is now on systems and procedures, areas that fall within the specialist skills and experience of these investigators.

At the conclusion of their inquiries, the Health and Safety Executive will review the evidence and reach a prosecution decision. The Crown Prosecution Service is on hand to advise the police, but only if evidence of a serious criminal offence comes to light would the case be passed back to the Crown Prosecution Service to consider.

CABINET OFFICE

Panel for Regulatory Accountability

Mr. Norman: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office (1) what provision has been and will be made for publicising *(a)* the decision by the Panel for Regulatory Accountability whether or not to clear a given regulatory proposal and *(b)* the grounds on which the decision was made; [178832]

(2) what provision has been and will be made for publicising the decisions of the Regulatory Impact Unit regarding whether a particular regulatory proposal requires clearance from the Panel for Regulatory Accountability; [178833]

(3) if he will list the regulatory proposals which have been deemed by the Regulatory Impact Unit to require clearance from the Panel for Regulatory Accountability during the past three months; [178835]

(4) how many times the Panel for Regulatory Accountability *(a)* has met in the past year and *(b)* is scheduled to meet in the forthcoming year. [178836]

Mr. Alexander: It has been established practice under successive Governments not to disclose information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees, under exemption 2, of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Royal Hall, Harrogate

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what funding central Government will make available to pay for the restoration of the Royal Hall in Harrogate; and if she will make a statement on Government support for the restoration. [178660]

Estelle Morris: Central Government funding for the historic environment is channelled through English Heritage. Both English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund run a number of grant schemes that provide assistance for the preservation of listed buildings of historical and architectural importance. These organisations are responsible for the allocation of funds within these schemes at arms length of Government. In the case of the Royal Hall, Harrogate, the Heritage Lottery Fund is discussing with Harrogate borough council how best to secure the building's future.

TV Licensing Authority

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport under what powers the TV Licensing Authority is permitted to demand access to people's homes to check whether or not they possess a television; and if she will make a statement. [179058]

Estelle Morris: TV Licensing officers may enter a person's home only with their consent or under a warrant issued under section 366 of the Communications Act 2003 by a justice of the peace, or, in Scotland, a sheriff. Such a warrant may be issued only if there are reasonable grounds for believing that an offence related to the installation or use of a television receiver has been or is being committed.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

E-mail

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Chairman of the Information Committee what further steps are to be

taken by the Parliamentary Communications Directorate to limit the amount of spam e-mails received by hon. Members, peers, and their staff; and if he will make a statement. [178005]

Mr. Key: Plans to introduce a new improved spam management system are well advanced. The Parliamentary Communications Directorate aims to introduce the new system, which will offer a more comprehensive service than at present, before the summer recess.

PRIME MINISTER

Arctic Medal

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Prime Minister when he last requested a review of the requests to award an Arctic Medal; and what process was followed. [175051]

The Prime Minister: Earlier this year, my hon. Friend the Minister for Veterans at the Ministry of Defence (Mr. Caplin) reviewed all the recent claims from veterans for new medals, including the campaign for an Arctic Medal. Those who served in the Arctic convoys were awarded the Atlantic Star in respect of their service.

However, the Government are keeping medals for various groups of veterans under review

Ministerial Documents

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Prime Minister what recent review has been undertaken concerning the prioritisation and distribution of documents that are marked for Ministers' attention by their private offices. [179067]

The Prime Minister: I refer the right hon. and learned Member to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Pendle (Mr. Prentice) on 14 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 621W.

Second World War Commemoration

Lady Hermon: To ask the Prime Minister what plans the Government have to mark the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War; and if he will make a statement. [178899]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the announcement made by my hon. Friend the Minister for Veterans Affairs (Mr. Caplin) on 9 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 309.

Stormont Negotiations

Lady Hermon: To ask the Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the outcome of the negotiations conducted at Stormont on 8 June between representatives of the Democratic Unionist Party, Sinn Fein and Mr. Jonathan Powell. [178900]

The Prime Minister: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Murphy) had made it clear that informal discussions with all parties would continue during the European election campaign. The review of the operation of the Agreement resumed on 15 June and the outcome we are working towards remains the restoration of the institutions.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Aerospace

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the extent of state support for the aerospace industry in *(a)* the United States, *(b)* European Union member states and *(c)* Brazil in comparison with Government support for UK aerospace. [177142]

Jacqui Smith: The Government are aware of various forms of support provided by a number of other governments to their civil aerospace industries (e.g. basic R&D, product development capital or export sales financing). International comparisons are complicated by the way in which that support is focussed and whether it is repayable.

The Government have provided strong support for the aerospace industry in the UK over many years—including support for R&D projects, repayable launch investment (almost £1 billion since 1997) and export sales financing. We are also working with the industry to improve its productivity and competitiveness through the implementation of the Aerospace Innovation and Growth Team Report's recommendations.

Afghanistan

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the volume of trade was between the United Kingdom and Afghanistan in each year since 1979. [178032]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The volume of trade between the United Kingdom and Afghanistan since 1979 is contained in the following table.

UK Trade with Afghanistan

£000

	UK Exports	*UK Imports*
1979	9,570	20,274
1980	6,831	20,159
1981	7,725	22,892
1982	9,341	20,619
1983	10,310	19,836
1984	11,891	20,775
1985	13,882	52,060
1986	11,443	11,913
1987	10,735	11,288
1988	12,109	11,501
1989	5,376	4,813
1990	7,816	9,194
1991	6,956	5,207
1992	4,926	4,676

UK Trade with Afghanistan

£000

	UK Exports	UK Imports
1993	5,915	4,310
1994	7,830	4,096
1995	7,156	1,165
1996	7,581	2,707
1997	9,579	2,948
1998	10,565	2,535
1999	3,624	1,769
2000	3,251	8,493
2001	3,812	564
2002	2,851	249
2003	9,871	467

Deregulation

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the need for reduced, simpler regulation expressed by her Ministers at the Competitiveness Council of 17 to 18 May refers to *(a)* deregulation or a cutting back of the Community Acquis and *(b)* the removal of legal texts that are obsolete without changing their legal status. [178730]

Jacqui Smith: The UK attaches great importance to improving and simplifying EU legislation. Simplification can contribute to reducing the negative economic impact of regulation through consolidation and codification of legislation, and through removing obsolete measures. In addition, it is concerned with identifying areas of legislation where burdens may arise from unnecessary complexity, duplication or cross-impacts, and seeking to eliminate these.

Energy Bill

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions she has had with representatives of the European Commission about the possibility of investigations into the implications for state aid of provisions contained in the Energy Bill. [178667]

Mr. Timms: The main state aid implication in the Energy Bill arises from the creation of the Nuclear Decommissioning Agency (NDA). DTI officials have had a number of informal meetings with the Commission services on this case.

As a result of these meetings a formal notification of the UK's intention to support the creation of the NDA was submitted to the European Commission in December 2003. The Commission are still considering this case.

EU Trade

Denzil Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total value of surplus or deficit accruing to the European Union from trade with Japan was in each of the three latest years for which figures are available. [178101]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Figures on the European Union's crude trade balance in goods with Japan for the period 2001–03 are given in the table.

£ million

2001	-19,505
2002	-16,248
2003	-18,483

Source:
Eurostat Intra and Extra EU Trade.

Denzil Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the value of the surplus or deficit accruing to the European Union from trading with *(a)* India and *(b)* China was in each of the last three years for which figures are available. [178128]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Figures on the European Union's crude trade balance in goods with India and China for the period 2001–03 are given in the following table:

£ million

	India	China
2001	-187	-28,488
2002	588	-29,945
2003	599	-38,269

Source:
Eurostat Intra and Extra EU Trade.

Israel

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the value of UK imports from Israel was in each of the last five years; what proportion of total imports were defence-related; and what proportion of total imports were from the Occupied Territories. [178585]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: According to statistics compiled by HM Customs and Excise, the information is as follows:

Imports of goods	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
UK imports from Israel and Occupied Palestinian Territories (£ million)	1,041	1,062	975	911	882
Defence-related imports, as a percentage of total imports	0.9	1.7	1.2	0.6	0.5
Imports from Occupied Palestinian Territories as a percentage of total imports	0.004	0.000	0.012	0.026	0.050

Source:
Overseas Trade Statistics of the United Kingdom, HM Customs and Excise.

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the value of UK exports to Israel was in each of the last five years; what proportion of total exports were defence-related; and what proportion of total exports were destined for the Occupied Territories. [178586]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The information is as follows:

Exports of goods	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
UK exports to Israel and Occupied Palestinian Territories (£ million)	1,298	1,519	1,366	1,440	1,377
Defence-related exports, as a percentage of total exports	0.03	0.09	0.11	0.15	0.02
Exports to Occupied Palestinian Territories as a percentage of total exports	0.023	0.009	0.018	0.008	0.050

Source:
Overseas Trade Statistics of the United Kingdom; HM Customs and Excise.
UK Strategic Export Control Annual Report; FCO, DFID, MOD, DTI.

Medical Research Council

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she is taking to implement the concordat agreement for funding for Medical Research Council clinical trials. [178823]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I have been asked to reply.

The concordat is a long standing agreement between the health departments of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and the Medical Research Council (MRC). It has recently been renewed, now to be called a partnership agreement and a copy will be posted on the websites of the Department and the MRC shortly. Implementation is done through normal operational arrangements.

UK Atomic Energy Authority Constabulary

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many employees of the Atomic Energy Authority Constabulary are members of a trade union. [R] [178318]

Mr. Timms: As far as I am aware, no members of the UKAEA Constabulary are members of a trade union. About 80 per cent. belong to the UKAEA Police Federation.

About 55 per cent. of the civilian staff of the UKAEA Constabulary are members of a trade union.

Post Office Reinvention Programme

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what mechanisms she adopts to monitor the compliance by Post Office Ltd. with its agreement with her that 95 per cent. of the urban population will be within one mile of a post office at the completion of the Urban Reinvention Programme when it is implementing stages of that programme in urban areas; [177698]

(2) what action she intends to take to ensure that 95 per cent. of people in Birmingham will be within one mile of a post office at the completion of the Post Office Urban Reinvention Programme. [177699]

Mr. Timms: Compliance with the commitment that at least 95 per cent. of the urban population nationally will still live within one mile of a post office at the end of the urban reinvention programme is an operational responsibility of Post Office Ltd. I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to respond direct to the hon. Member.

Regional Funding (Greater London)

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list projects within the Greater London area which have attracted European Union regional funding in each of the last three years. [178681]

Jacqui Smith: Thousands of London projects have benefited and will benefit from European funding from the Objective 2, Objective 3, URBAN, EQUAL and INTERREG European Programmes. Between 2000 and 2006, London will receive over £650 million from these European Structural Funds and Community Initiatives, matched by similar sums from the public and private sectors.

A list of these projects has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Scrap Aluminium

Mr. Page: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of scrap aluminium was exported in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2000. [174975]

Jacqui Smith: Exports of aluminium waste and scrap increased from 141.2 thousand tonnes in 2000 to 297.4 thousand tonnes in 2003[1]. The requested percentages cannot be calculated as there are no official figures for the quantity of aluminium waste and scrap collected (including "new" scrap).

[1] *Source:* Overseas Trade Statistics, HM Customs and Excise.

Kenya

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the value of trade between the UK and Kenya was in the last year for which figures are available. [178680]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: According to information published by HM Customs and Excise, in 2003 UK imports of goods from Kenya were worth £217 million. UK exports to Kenya were worth £172 million. Information on trade in services, with Kenya, is not available.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Child Psychiatrists

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many consultant child psychiatrists are undergoing training in Northern Ireland; and when each is expected to complete training. [179047]

Mr. Gardiner: There are currently eight specialist trainees in child and adolescent psychiatry. Of these three are expected to complete their training in 2004, two in 2005 and three in 2006.

Cross-Border Bodies

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which cross-border bodies funded in whole or in part by a Northern Ireland Department publish the minutes of their meetings on their websites. [176890]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The Loughs Agency, an agency of the Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission publishes minutes of meetings on its website (www.loughs-agency.org). To date it has published the minutes of five Board meetings.

Cultural Venues

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when building work will commence on the Arts Venue for the Cathedral Quarter; what the anticipated completion date is; what the estimate cost of the project is; and what additional funding has been identified as necessary to ensure the viability of the project. [178553]

Angela Smith: A business case is currently being considered for a new purpose-built cultural and educational facility in Belfast's Cathedral Quarter. No decision has yet been taken on whether the proposal should proceed. The capital costs of the project are currently estimated at between £23 million and £27 million. The Arts Council of Northern Ireland has made an in-principle commitment of £4 million of National Lottery funds towards these costs. Current projections suggest that additional revenue funding of over £1 million would be required in the initial three-year period before the facility becomes fully operational and meets its income potential.

Driving Instructors

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will publish the views expressed in response to the Approved Driving Instructors Review consultation paper. [178395]

Angela Smith: Preliminary analysis of the responses indicates that there is widespread opposition from the Approved Driving Instructors industry to the proposal that registered driving instructors should undergo a driving theory test, including a hazard perception test, as part of routine supervisory arrangements.

The Driver and Vehicle Testing Agency is currently considering the responses in detail and in due course will make a recommendation to me, taking into account all relevant issues including the views of the industry.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many times *(a)* he and *(b)* other Government officials have met representatives of the Northern Ireland Approved Driving Instructors Association regarding the proposals contained in the Approved Driving Instructors Review consultation paper. [178396]

Angela Smith: The information requested is as follows:

(a) Ministers have not met with the Northern Ireland Approved Driving Instructors Association (NIADIA) regarding the proposals contained in the consultation paper.

(b) Officials from the Driver and Vehicle Testing Agency attended a meeting of the association on 16 February 2004 at which the proposals were discussed. The agency also held meetings in Cookstown, Newry, Londonderry, Belfast and Omagh in late March. These meetings were attended by approximately 300 driving instructors, many of whom were members of NIADIA or other associations. The proposals within the paper were discussed at all of these meetings. In addition, a scheduled biannual meeting between the agency and NIADIA took place on 4 May 2004.

Electoral Register (Fermanagh)

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people in the Fermanagh South Tyrone constituency have been excluded from the electoral register on grounds of insufficient mental capacity in each of the last three years. [162169]

Mr. Spellar: This issue is an operational matter and is, therefore, the responsibility of the Chief Electoral Officer. He will be writing to the hon. Gentleman in due course.

A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library.

Health Services

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on decisions to withdraw treatment from hospital patients. [179087]

Mr. Gardiner: The decision to commence or end treatment is made by clinical staff on an individual basis, taking account of the patient's clinical condition and the relative merits and potential side effects of any particular treatment. Informed consent is an important element, as are a patient's personal wishes regarding treatment and resuscitation.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken to ensure that all patients requiring MRI scans are receiving them promptly. [179115]

Mr. Gardiner: MRI provision in Northern Ireland is being enhanced to reduce waiting times for patients. There are currently seven MRI scanners available across the Province and three more are planned for later this year at Antrim, Craigavon, and Belfast City hospitals. A number of measures have also been taken to reduce waiting times for MRI scans including the introduction of evening scanning sessions at the Royal Group of Hospitals, use of mobile scanners, and use of private facilities.

Higher Education

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the Government income from Northern Ireland-domiciled undergraduates' contributions in tuition fees, student loan repayments and interest on student loans has been since 1995–96. [178242]

Mr. Gardiner: Tuition fees are paid by students directly to their institutions, and therefore no income is generated for Government. On the basis of Resource Allocation Budgets, student loan repayments and interest on student loans from 2001–02, the earliest date

from which information is available, are set out in the table, which also includes, for each year, the total amount of student loans outstanding:

£ million

	Repayments	Interest	Outstanding loans
2001–02	9.264	6.231	321.647
2002–03	11.564	6.034	424,223
2003–04	13.000	9.533	517,839

Unlike commercial loans, interest on student loans is charged at the rate of inflation only. This ensures that, in real terms, the amount repaid is equal to the amount borrowed.

Identity Cards

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether Northern Ireland will be included in an identity card scheme; and if he will make a statement. [171763]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The Identity Card scheme involving the registration of individuals and the issue of identity cards will operate on a UK-wide basis. If, as we hope, we can restore the devolved institutions at an early date, then it would be up to the devolved administration in Northern Ireland to decide what use they make of the identity cards.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether Northern Ireland was considered for the identity card pilot project. [171764]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The biometric enrolment pilot being run by the UK Passport Service is not an identity cards pilot but rather intended to test the processes around, and user experience of biometric enrolment. Identity cards are not being issued to volunteers who participate in the project. Initially, pilot data is being obtained from fixed sites in England and Scotland. In the next phase of the pilot, a mobile enrolment unit will travel throughout the UK, including Northern Ireland.

Inward Investment

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what criteria are used by Invest Northern Ireland in determining locations for visits by potential inward investors to create employment in Northern Ireland. [178613]

Mr. Gardiner: Invest NI promotes and markets the Northern Ireland business proposition as one single entity. The rationale for this approach is that internationally mobile investment is fiercely competitive and potential investors demand detailed information against a wide range of criteria such as size of employment pool, skills availability, property and infrastructure.

Taking into account the time available Invest NI can suggest a visit programme which closely matches a company's requirements. The locations of existing investors, who participate in the inward visits, also influence the proposed visit programme. However, the company always has the final say in which elements of the proposed programme to accept or reject including where to visit within Northern Ireland.

Invest NI is fully aware of its obligations in respect of securing visits to and projects in New Targeting Social Need areas, and addresses this in its illustrative incentive packages.

Juvenile Offenders

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many minors in Northern Ireland have been questioned and cautioned in each of the last five years. [171005]

Mr. Pearson: The information is as follows.

Financial year	Number of official cautions
1999–2000	1,325
2000–01	1,314
2001–02	1,095
2002–03	1,045

The PSNI introduced a new Youth Diversion Scheme from 1 September 2003 which provides a new framework to respond to all children and young persons under the age of 17. The scheme uses restorative interventions and the title and structure of the previous "official caution" is now called a "restorative caution".

No statistics are available for the period 1 April 2003 to 31 August 2003.

Since 1 September 2003 there have been 485 restorative cautions issued under the new scheme.

Lord Alderdice

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the likely cost to public funds is of the portrait that has been commissioned of the former Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly, Lord Alderdice; and who recommended the commissioning of the portrait. [178855]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The proposal that a portrait be commissioned to mark the retirement of the former Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly, Lord Alderdice, was proposed at a meeting held earlier this year attended by representatives of the main Northern Ireland political parties. I subsequently agreed to this proposal. Arrangements for commissioning the portrait have still to be made so the cost is not yet known.

Natural Gas

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he expects the Northern Ireland Authority for Energy Regulation to grant a licence for the supply of natural gas in the north-west and south-north areas.[178617]

Mr. Gardiner: Detailed negotiations between the Northern Ireland Authority for Energy Regulation (NIAER) and Bord Gáis Eireann about the distribution and supply of natural gas to towns outside the Greater Belfast area have been continuing since December 2003. NIAER expects to publish a licence for consultation

within the next two months and, subject to responses, would hope to issue a formal licence in the early autumn of this year.

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the participants in each case supported by the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission in which the cost to the Commission has exceeded £50,000. [176893]

Mr. Spellar: As the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission is an independent body, I contacted the Chief Executive on behalf of the hon. Gentleman and have been provided with the following information:

The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission has supported two cases in which the costs have exceeded £50,000. Details of the cases and participants follow:

1. Cullen (Appellant) v. Chief Constable of the Constabulary (Respondent) (Northern Ireland)

Heard: 10 July 2003

Reported at: [2003] UKHL 39

Counsel was Seamus Treacy QC and Fiona Doherty BL instructed by Madden and Finucane Solicitors

2. In the matter of an application for judicial review by 4E' and in the matter of the decisions of the Chief Constable of the Royal Ulster Constabulary and the Secretary of State

Heard: 10 September 2003

Decision: Not yet known

Counsel was Seamus Treacy QC and Karen Quinliven BL instructed by Madden and Finucane Solicitors.

Parliamentary Constituency Maps

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make up-to-date maps of Northern Ireland parliamentary constituencies available to the House of Commons Library Research Section. [170035]

Mr. Spellar: The Provisional Recommendations for new parliamentary constituencies in Northern Ireland were announced by the Parliamentary Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland on 29 April. Copies of up-to-date maps for the proposed constituencies have been placed in the Library.

Police

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many Police Service of Northern Ireland officers work for the *(a)* Oversight Commissioner and *(b)* Police Ombudsman; and if he will make a statement. [173588]

Mr. Pearson: There are no Police Service of Northern Ireland officers working in either the Oversight Commissioner's Office or the Police Ombudsman's Office.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the *(a)* salary and *(b)* expenses allowance is of *(a)* the Policing Oversight Commissioner and *(b)* each member of the Oversight Commissioner's team. [173589]

Mr. Pearson: I have been advised by the Office of the Oversight Commissioner of the following salary and expense details for the Oversight Commissioner and his team of five evaluators:

(a) The Commissioner's salary from May 2000-March 2003 was £203,290.

The evaluators' salaries from May 2000-March 2003 were £350,602.

(b) The Commissioner's expenses from May 2000-March 2003 were £101,043.

The evaluators' expenses from May 2000-March 2003 were £330,571.

The Oversight Commissioner and his team of evaluators are based in North America. They travel to Northern Ireland three times per year to conduct evaluations of the implementation of the Patten Recommendations. In addition, occasional short review meetings are held by the Oversight Commissioner and the evaluators in North America.

The expense allowances for the Oversight Commissioner and his team of evaluators are primarily made up of accommodation and flight costs. These are paid directly to suppliers by the Office of the Oversight Commissioner and are subject to seasonal and contractual variations. The figures have been obtained from the audited annual accounts of the Office of the Oversight Commissioner.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what funding has been allocated for the *(a)* start-up costs and *(b)* running costs in the first two years of the Office of the Northern Ireland Policing Oversight Commissioner. [173590]

Mr. Pearson: The Office of the Oversight Commissioner was established in May 2000. The start up costs were £224,770.

Running costs in the first two years to 31 March 2002 were £947,027, broken down as follows:

2000–01: £272,131 (excluding start-up cost)

2001–02: £674,896.

Police Fund Budget

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of the Police Fund budget has been spent in support of *(a)* RUC officers injured and *(b)* RUC families bereaved through terrorism in each year since its establishment. [178579]

Mr. Pearson: I can advise that the percentage breakdown of the Police Fund budget in support of injured officers and bereaved families is as follows:

Direct grant expenditure as a percentage of budget

Category	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Injured officers	36	40
Bereaved families including widows	17	17

A further 28 per cent. of the 2002–03 budget and 18 per cent. of the 2003–04 budget was expended on organisation project costs such as reimbursement of costs to the Benevolent Fund and client service costs such as psychological counselling services. This expenditure, in the main, cannot be broken down into individual client costs although clearly the programmes benefited both injured officers and bereaved families.

Rural Communities (Transport)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what action the Government are taking to assist older people in rural communities who do not have access to a car. [178611]

Mr. Spellar: The Department for Regional Development's commitments to improving transport services in rural areas are set out in the Regional Transportation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002–12.

The Strategy seeks to improve travel opportunities for people living in deep rural areas, villages and small settlements. The initiatives in the RTS, when fully implemented, will reduce inequalities in society by improving accessibility for, amongst others, people with disabilities, people without access to a car, older people and people living in rural areas. The pace of implementation of the Strategy will depend on the level of public funding, which will be determined through the annual Budgetary processes.

The Department is seeking to improve transport opportunities for older people living in rural communities through a range of initiatives. The Rural Transport Fund provides revenue support to maintain a network of some 44 Ulsterbus rural routes, throughout Northern Ireland, which would otherwise be uneconomical to run. Older people are able to get free concessionary travel on these rural services.

The Department also financially supports 18 Rural Community Transport Partnerships throughout Northern Ireland. These seek to meet the mobility needs of those older people and people with disabilities who live in rural areas and who are unable to make use of conventional transport networks.

In 2003–04 the Department for Regional Development initiated a public tendering exercise (Bus Challenge) to attract new stage carriage routes across Northern Ireland. Contracts were awarded for a number of rural routes. These routes provide older people living in rural areas with more opportunities to access local facilities and link with the wider public transport network.

Later this year the Department intends to initiate several Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) pilots in deep rural areas. It is hoped that these types of services will offer greater independence and new travel opportunities for older people living in those areas. DRT services may, for example, divert off certain sections of their route if requested and provide bookable door-to-door services for older people and people with disabilities.

The RTS committed the Department to prepare an Accessible Transport Strategy for Northern Ireland. The ATS will focus on the transport needs of older people and people with disabilities. A draft Accessible Transport Strategy is currently being prepared and will be published in the autumn together with an Equality Impact assessment for public consultation. The Department aims to publish a final strategy by March 2005.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much public money has been allocated by the Department for Regional Development in each of the last three years towards the provision of public transport in rural communities in Northern Ireland. [178612]

Mr. Spellar: Under the Rural Transport Fund the following monies were allocated to deliver uneconomic public transport services in rural areas but which were regarded as socially desirable:

	£ million
2001–02	1.6
2002–03	1.7
2003–04	1.8

This Fund allowed the Department to provide revenue support to uneconomic rural routes. In addition the Fund also provides further support to 18 Rural Community Transport Partnerships who offer a range of transport services which complement the conventional transport networks.

The Department for Regional Development recently initiated a public tendering exercise (Bus Challenge) to attract new stage carriage routes across Northern Ireland. As a result a number of contracts were awarded and which included a number of rural routes. Financial support from the Department for these rural routes during 2003–04 amounted to around £29,000.

Fuel Duty Rebate was also provided to Ulsterbus and a number of private operators:

	£
2001–02	5,933,750.00
2002–03	5,798,369.00
2003–04	5,892,531.00

Tourism

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many tourists visited Northern Ireland in each *(a)* year and *(b)* month in the past 20 years. [178843]

Mr. Gardiner: A breakdown of the total number of non-Northern Ireland tourists over the past twenty years has been placed in the Library. Monthly breakdowns are not available for visitors entering Northern Ireland from the Republic of Ireland, or prior to 1990 for visitors entering Northern Ireland directly.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what lessons he learned about the operation of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission during his recent visit; [178577]

(2) what conclusions he has drawn from his trip to South Africa in relation to the suitability of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission for Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [178578]

Mr. Paul Murphy: I had a range of very constructive meetings with a variety of individuals and organisations during my recent visit to South Africa. I am sure that they will prove useful as I consider ways in which we can deal with the past in Northern Ireland. There are many interesting lessons to be learned from the South African experience, and I will be reflecting on these. But any solution must be tailored to the particular circumstances of Northern Ireland and must command widespread support.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Active Communities Unit

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the Active Community Unit's expenditure on research was in 2003–04, broken down by topic. [171065]

Fiona Mactaggart: The following expenditure on research was commissioned by the Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate on behalf of the Active Community Unit (ACU) in 2003–04:

	£
ACU: programme evaluations	
Compact/Codes of Practice: Implementation	29,526
Mentoring Fund and Mentor Points projects	90,442
Capital Modernisation Fund	3,000
Volunteer-involving organisations: TimeBank, Do-It, Community Channel (Media Trust)	72,000
ACU: VCS funding and performance	
Central Government funding, 2001–02 to 2003–04	46,278
Local government funding, 2001–02 to 2003–04	34,633
State of the Sector Panel: Development Project	12,593
State of the Sector Panel: Fieldwork Project	631,982
"What works" re community involvement in area-based initiatives	25,400

Antisocial Behaviour Orders

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the consequences of a youth breaking an antisocial behaviour order are. [178568]

Ms Blears: Breach of an antisocial behaviour order (ASBO) is a criminal offence. The usual range of sentencing options for juveniles up to the maximum is available, with the exception of a conditional discharge which is not available for breach of an ASBO. The maximum penalty for breach of ASBO for 12 to 17-year-olds is a 24-month Detention and Training Order. 10 to 11-year-olds can be given community orders for ASBO breaches (these are not custodial).

Asylum/Immigration

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 10 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1567–68W, on asylum and immigration, for what reasons people are referred to medical inspectors; and what assessment he has made of the reasons for the increase in referrals seen at Heathrow. [162221]

Mr. Browne: Under Schedule 2 paragraph 2 of the Immigration Act 1971 (c.77), immigration officers have the power to refer any individual who is subject to immigration control to a doctor for a medical examination at the port of entry.

Under paragraph 36 of the Immigration Rules (HC395 as amended)

> "A person who intends to remain in the United Kingdom for more than 6 months should normally be referred to the Medical Inspector for examination. If he produces a medical certificate he should be advised to hand it to the Medical Inspector. Any person seeking entry who mentions health or medical treatment as a reason for his visit, or who appears not to be in good mental or physical health, should also be referred to the Medical Inspector; and the Immigration Officer has discretion, which should be exercised sparingly, to refer for examination in any other case."

However, the long-standing policy (formalised by the 1992 Department of Health publication "Medical Examination under the Immigration Act 1971: Instructions to Medical Inspectors") is that normally only those who:

> (i) are seeking leave to enter the United Kingdom for 6 months or more and have come from countries where there is a high risk of having been exposed to infectious diseases, such as tuberculosis; or
>
> (ii) mention health or medical treatment as a reason for seeking entry to the United Kingdom, or appear unwell are referred for medical examination.

Only Heathrow and Gatwick have a permanent medical inspector. At other UK ports where there is no permanent medical inspector doctors are available on-call.

There has been no change in the policy for referral of passengers to the medical inspector. It is not possible to provide reasons for the increase in the numbers referred without conducting a full and detailed analysis which would be at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for asylum to the UK have been made in each year since 1979, broken down by nationality. [177103]

Mr. Browne: The table shows the number of applications received for asylum in the United Kingdom, by nationality, 1994–2003 the latest published data. Information for previous years is published in successive editions of the Home Office annual statistical bulletin "Asylum Statistics United Kingdom", copies of which are available from the Library of the House, and from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html. The nationalities provided in the publication have changed to some extent over the years, reflecting changes in the nationalities applying for asylum. Provision of a consistent set of data for all nationalities, for data back to 1979, would incur disproportionate cost.

Applications[1] received for asylum in the United Kingdom, excluding dependants, by nationality, 1994–2003

	Number of principal applicants									
Nationality	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999[2]*	*2000[2]*	*2001[3]*	*2002[4]*	*2003[4]*
Albania	75	110	105	445	560	1,310	1,490	1,065	1,150	595
Czech Republic	5	15	55	240	515	1,790	1,200	825	1,365	75
Macedonia	n/a	n/a	15	20	50	90	65	755	310	60
Moldova	5	10	*	20	25	180	235	425	820	375
Poland	360	1,210	900	565	1,585	1,860	1,015	615	990	95
Romania	355	770	455	605	1,015	1,985	2,160	1,400	1,210	545
Russia	n/a	n/a	205	180	185	685	1,000	450	295	285
SAM[5]	n/a	n/a	400	1,865	7,395	11,465	6,070	3,230	2,265	805
Turkey	2,045	1,820	1,495	1,445	2,015	2,850	3,990	3,695	2,835	2,395
Ukraine	n/a	n/a	235	490	370	775	770	445	365	295
Other Former USSR	590	785	960	1,325	2,235	2,460	2,275	895	1,245	620
Other Former Yugo.	1,385	1,565	620	375	535	2,625	2,200	85	90	45
Europe other	535	770	1,035	1,575	1,260	200	415	335	300	85
Europe total	5,360	7,050	6,475	9,145	17,745	28,280	22,880	14,215	13,235	6,280
Colombia	405	525	1,005	1,330	425	1,000	505	365	420	225
Ecuador	105	250	435	1,205	280	610	445	255	315	145
Jamaica	110	150	125	130	105	180	310	525	1,310	925
Americas other	265	415	205	165	165	240	155	170	240	220
Americas total	890	1,340	1,765	2,825	975	2,025	1,420	1,315	2,290	1,520
Algeria	995	1,865	715	715	1,260	1,385	1,635	1,140	1,060	535
Angola	605	555	385	195	150	545	800	1,015	1,420	860
Burundi	50	95	60	85	215	780	620	610	700	645
Cameroon	75	85	105	175	95	245	355	380	615	495
Congo	40	80	75	90	150	450	485	540	600	355
Dem. Rep. Congo	775	935	680	690	660	1,240	1,030	1,370	2,215	1,525
Eritrea	110	245	135	125	345	565	505	620	1,180	955
Ethiopia	730	585	205	145	345	455	415	610	700	640
Gambia	140	1,170	245	125	45	30	50	65	130	95
Ghana	2,035	1,915	780	350	225	195	285	190	275	320
Ivory Coast	705	245	125	70	95	190	445	275	315	395
Kenya	1,130	1,395	1,170	605	885	485	455	305	350	220
Nigeria	4,340	5,825	2,900	1,480	1,380	945	835	810	1,125	990
Rwanda	100	135	80	90	280	820	760	530	655	265
Sierra Leone	1,810	855	395	815	565	1,125	1,330	1,940	1,155	385
Somalia	1,840	3,465	1,780	2,730	4,685	7,495	5,020	6,420	6,540	5,100
Sudan	330	345	280	230	250	280	415	390	655	930
Tanzania	205	1,535	225	90	80	80	60	80	40	30
Uganda	360	365	215	220	210	420	740	480	715	710
Zimbabwe	55	105	130	60	80	230	1,010	2,140	7,655	3,280
Africa other	530	750	600	425	375	465	670	670	1,295	1,640
Africa total	16,960	22,545	11,290	9,515	12,380	18,435	17,920	20,590	29,390	20,370
Iran	520	615	585	585	745	1,320	5,610	3,420	2,630	2,875
Iraq	550	930	965	1,075	1,295	1,800	7,475	6,680	14,570	4,045
Middle East other	910	755	600	675	745	1,045	1,330	1,165	1,115	1,065
Middle East total	1,985	2,295	2,150	2,335	2,785	4,165	14,415	11,265	18,315	7,985
Afghanistan	325	580	675	1,085	2,395	3,975	5,555	8,920	7,205	2,290
Bangladesh	310	685	645	545	460	530	795	510	720	730
China	425	790	820	1,945	1,925	2,625	4,000	2,390	3,675	3,445
India	2,030	3,255	2,220	1,285	1,030	1,365	2,120	1,850	1,865	2,275
Pakistan	1,810	2,915	1,915	1,615	1,975	2,615	3,165	2,860	2,405	1,905
Sri Lanka	2,350	2,070	1,340	1,830	3,505	5,130	6,395	5,510	3,130	705
Vietnam	5	5	10	10	35	105	180	400	840	1,130
Asia other	260	385	270	255	615	1,120	1,025	1,040	915	655
Asia total	7,515	10,685	7,885	8,570	11,940	17,465	23,230	23,480	20,755	13,135
Nationality not known	125	50	80	105	190	785	450	160	145	80
Grand total	32,830	43,965	29,640	32,500	46,015	71,160	80,315	71,025	84,130	49,370

n/a = data not available.

[1] Figures rounded to the nearest 5 with * = 1 or 2.

[2] May exclude some cases lodged at Local Enforcement Offices between January 1999 and March 2000.

[3] Revised figures.

[4] Provisional figures.

[5] Serbia and Montenegro (SAM) replaced Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) from 5 February 2003. SAM comprises the Republic of Serbia, the Republic of Montenegro, and the Province of Kosovo (administered by the UN on an interim basis since 1999).

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been granted asylum in the UK in each year since 1979, broken down by nationality. [177104]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 8 June 2004]:* The table shows the number of asylum seekers, excluding dependants, granted asylum in the United Kingdom by nationality, 1994 to 2003 the latest published data. Information for previous years is published in successive editions of the Home Office annual statistical bulletin "Asylum Statistics United Kingdom", copies of which are available from the Library of the House, and from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html. The nationalities provided in the publication have changed to some extent over the years, reflecting changes in the nationalities applying for asylum. Provision of a consistent set of data for all nationalities, for data back to 1979, would incur disproportionate cost.

Cases[1, 2] recognised as refugees and granted asylum, excluding dependants, by nationality, 1994 to 2003

	Number of grants to principal applicants									
Nationality	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000[3]*	*2001[3, 4]*	*2002[5]*	*2003[5]*
Albania	—	—	—	*	*	25	25	25	20	5
Czech Republic	—	—	—	—	—	*	10	5	*	—
Macedonia	n/a	n/a	—	—	*	*	*	5	5	—
Moldova	—	—	—	*	—	—	5	5	5	*
Poland	—	—	*	*	*	*	20	5	*	5
Romania	5	5	5	5	*	5	15	5	5	*
Russia	n/a	n/a	5	5	*	*	25	20	15	10
SAM[6]	n/a	n/a	70	1,355	935	6,290	275	360	225	30
Turkey	90	50	55	85	40	85	180	210	150	95
Ukraine	n/a	n/a	—	5	—	*	15	10	*	—
Other Former USSR	5	10	5	10	5	10	60	55	55	25
Other Former Yugo.	25	285	1,080	405	70	45	110	40	10	5
Europe Other	5	5	*	5	—	15	50	25	5	*
Europe Total	130	355	1,220	1,870	1,060	6,480	790	760	500	175
Colombia	5	*	10	20	150	5	60	40	45	20
Ecuador	—	—	—	—	—	—	25	10	20	5
Jamaica	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	5	10	*
Americas Other	5	10	5	15	25	*	30	10	5	5
Americas Total	10	10	15	35	175	5	120	70	80	30
Algeria	20	15	30	105	310	475	65	65	20	5
Angola	5	*	10	10	5	20	70	100	65	25
Burundi	—	—	—	5	195	20	85	225	115	115
Cameroon	—	—	—	5	10	—	20	50	40	20
Congo	—	—	—	*	5	5	45	115	35	35
Dem. Rep. Congo	10	15	15	20	10	15	145	325	155	90
Eritrea	*	—	*	5	10	5	35	120	140	65
Ethiopia	5	5	10	20	35	20	40	90	50	15
Gambia	—	10	15	5	10	*	5	5	—	*
Ghana	5	*	5	10	10	—	40	50	15	10
Ivory Coast	*	*	10	40	50	—	15	20	10	15
Kenya	—	*	5	15	5	15	50	25	15	10
Nigeria	*	*	15	65	100	—	20	25	25	15
Rwanda	5	—	*	80	145	20	85	205	125	25
Sierra Leone	5	*	5	5	10	5	95	165	55	15
Somalia	5	10	15	985	2,330	130	5,310	2,910	2,515	1,660
Sudan	30	10	55	60	55	40	110	120	70	130
Tanzania	*	—	*	—	*	*	5	5	5	*
Uganda	15	5	5	5	5	5	20	55	35	30
Zimbabwe	—	—	*	*	—	—	20	120	2,240	870
Africa Other	10	*	5	15	15	5	55	90	70	40
Africa Total	115	80	210	1,460	3,315	785	6,340	4,880	5,795	3,190
Iran	100	165	195	155	125	55	390	575	395	115
Iraq	380	570	470	255	510	315	845	830	715	75
Middle East Other	45	50	80	100	60	45	115	150	90	60
Middle East Total	520	785	745	510	695	415	1,350	1,560	1,205	250
Afghanistan	5	15	25	20	35	15	375	2,320	115	40
Bangladesh	—	—	*	—	*	*	20	10	5	5
China	15	10	10	25	5	5	40	20	15	20
India	5	*	5	*	*	*	40	20	5	10
Pakistan	5	10	5	10	5	25	125	225	135	75
Sri Lanka	10	20	5	55	50	20	900	1,440	340	25
Vietnam	*	—	—	—	—	—	*	15	25	10

Cases[1, 2] recognised as refugees and granted asylum, excluding dependants, by nationality, 1994 to 2003

	Number of grants to principal applicants									
Nationality	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000[3]*	*2001[3, 4]*	*2002[5]*	*2003[5]*
Asia Other	5	*	—	*	5	*	45	80	50	35
Asia Total	50	60	50	115	100	65	1,545	4,130	685	225
Nationality not known	—	—	—	—	—	65	225	55	10	10
Grand Total	825	1,295	2,240	3,985	5,345	7,815	10,375	11,450	8,270	3,880

n/a = Data not available.
[1] Figures rounded to the nearest 5 with * = 1 or 2.
[2] Information is of initial determination decisions, excluding the outcome of appeals or other subsequent decisions.
[3] Exclude cases where asylum has been granted under the backlog criteria.
[4] Revised figures.
[5] Provisional figures.
[6] Serbia and Montenegro (SAM) replaced Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) from 5 February 2003. SAM comprises the Republic of Serbia, the Republic of Montenegro, and the Province of Kosovo (administered by the UN on an interim basis since 1999).

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Hertsmere (Mr. Clappison) of 2 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 700W, on asylum seekers, how many failed Iraqi asylum seekers have been removed from the UK in each month since June 2003 for which figures are available. [174755]

Mr. Browne: Estimates of the number of nationals of Iraq who had sought asylum at some stage and who were removed from the UK from between July 2003 and March 2004—the latest date for which figures are available—are shown in the table. These figures include persons departing leaving the UK after the initiation of enforcement action against them, and persons leaving under Assisted Voluntary Return Programmes operated on our behalf by the International Organisation for Migration.

Removals and voluntary departures[1] of asylum applicants, excluding dependants, nationals of Iraq, July 2003 to March 2004

Nationality	Number of principal applicants [2, 3, 4] *Iraq*
July 2003	20
August 2003	20
September 2003	15
October 2003	20
November 2003	20
December 2003	20
January 2004	60
February 2004	60
March 2004	90
Total July 2003 to March 2004	320

[1] Includes persons departing "voluntarily" after enforcement action had been initiated against them, persons leaving under Assisted Voluntary Return Programmes run by the International Organisation for Migration, and removals on safe third country grounds.
[2] Figures may include a small number of dependants leaving under Assisted Voluntary Return Programmes.
[3] Data have been estimated due to data quality issues.
[4] Provisional figures.
Note:
Figures rounded to the nearest five and may not sum due to rounding. Migration, and removals on safe third country grounds.

At present returns to Iraq are on a voluntary basis, but on 24 February 2004 my right hon. Friend, the Home Secretary announced that the UK was the first country to reach agreement with the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq to begin enforced returns of unsuccessful Iraqi asylum seekers. A pilot scheme will allow thirty Iraqi nationals per month to be returned initially. We will commence returns when the practical arrangements are finalised.

Information on the destination of these removals is not available except by examination of individual case-files at disproportionate cost.

Information on the nationality of those asylum seekers who were removed from the UK between April and June 2004 will be available in August 2004 from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at ttp://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers are being housed in local authority or housing association accommodation in the *(a)* Huntingdon constituency, *(b)* Cambridgeshire and *(c)* Corby constituency. [175133]

Mr. Browne: Statistics on the location of asylum seekers in the UK are linked to the available information on the support that the asylum seeker receives. Asylum seekers currently in the UK are either in receipt of support from the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) or from local authorities, or are supporting themselves. Statistics regarding the location of asylum seekers not in receipt of NASS support are unavailable.

The following table gives data on the number of asylum seekers supported in NASS accommodation in the Huntingdon constituency, Cambridgeshire and Corby constituency, as at the end of March 2004 (including dependants):

	Number supported in NASS accommodation (including dependants)
Cambridgeshire	115
Of which:	
Cambridge	—
Huntingdon	—
North-East Cambridgeshire	—
North-West Cambridgeshire	115
South Cambridgeshire	—
South-East Cambridgeshire	—
Corby	5

Note:
Figures are rounded to the nearest 5.

Information on the number of asylum seekers supported by NASS is published in the quarterly web pages and in the annual statistical bulletin Asylum Statistics United Kingdom, available from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

CCTV (Rochdale)

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much public funding has been spent on CCTV security cameras in Rochdale parliamentary constituency since 1997. [178499]

Ms Blears: Since 1997, the Home Office has provided £209,536 to Rochdale council for Close Circuit Television scheme.

Allocation of that funding locally is a matter for Rochdale metropolitan borough and the Greater Manchester police. The information is not held centrally.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 7 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 188W, on correspondence, when he will reply to the letter to him dated 14 April from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Muhammad Rafique. [178999]

Mr. Blunkett: I wrote again to my right hon. Friend on 15 June 2004.

Crime (Rochdale)

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in *(a)* overall recorded crime, *(b)* recorded violent crime, *(c)* burglaries and *(d)* vehicle thefts has been in Rochdale since 1997. [178490]

Ms Blears: The information requested is not available centrally.

Rochdale is a Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) area. Data at CDRP level has only been published from 1999–2000 onwards. Detailed statistics at CDRP level are available for 2002–03 on the new Home Office website: http://www.crimestatistics.org.uk

Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to make it a statutory responsibility for health and fire authorities to be involved in crime and disorder reduction partnerships. [178430]

Ms Blears: Section 97(2) of the Police Reform Act 2002 amended section 5(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to extend the range of bodies who are "responsible authorities" within Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships. Police authorities, fire authorities and health authorities in Wales became responsible authorities with effect from 1 April 2003.

Following discussions with the Department of Health, Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) in England became responsible authorities with effect from 30 April 2004.

PCTs, health authorities in Wales and fire authorities all now have a statutory responsibility to work in partnership with other partners in order to tackle crime and disorder and misuse of drugs issues locally. They are expected to play an important role in the three yearly audit of crime and drugs audit process, currently under way, and the formulation and delivery of the resultant crime and disorder reduction and misuse of drugs strategy covering the period 2005–08.

Departmental Administration Budget

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress has been made towards the 5 per cent. reduction in real terms in his Department's administration budget by 2008 announced by the Chancellor in the House on 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 331. [176511]

Mr. Blunkett: The real terms reduction of 5 per cent. or more will be a central feature of the public spending settlements for 2006–08 to be announced in detail later this year.

Graffiti Removal Notices

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions Merseyside local authorities have issued a graffiti removal notice to a statutory body since the inception of this power. [178328]

Ms Blears: This power is initially being piloted in 12 local authorities, in order to assess the impact on the businesses affected. Decisions on further rollout will be made in the light of this exercise. The power to issue graffiti removal notices is therefore not yet available to Merseyside authorities.

Identity Cards

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will set out the processes involved in reading the information stored on the proposed identity card. [171599]

Mr. Browne: The identity cards scheme is still in the early design stage but we are planning for it to be flexible in offering different levels of card checks to suit the particular transactions. For example, retailers wanting to check proof of age might just check the person against the photograph on the card and the date of birth. In comparison, public or private sector organisations might check a person's biometric using a reader and verify this against the National Identity Register before providing a service.

It is too soon to finalise how exactly the more sophisticated types of verification check will be made and the type of technology which will be used. However, as we made clear in the consultation document published on 26 April, verification checks of cards will simply confirm identity and other relevant details. The draft Identity Cards Bill also makes clear that these

checks will only be made with the consent of the individual, unless specifically allowed under the draft Bill.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 24 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1419W, on identity cards, if he will list all the categories of person who have not applied for an identity card who, under the proposals in the draft Identity Cards Bill, will be recorded on the National Identity Register. [176452]

Mr. Browne: Under Clause 2(4) of the draft Identity Cards Bill, individuals who have not applied to register, or who are not entitled, may be recorded. There is therefore no definitive list of which individuals will be recorded. Examples of who could be included under Clause 2(4) include failed asylum seekers, illegal immigrants who are removed and third country nationals intending to stay in the country for less than three months but whose passport has been surrendered for bail purposes.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 24 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1419W, on identity cards, what biometric data will be used in the processes being tested. [176453]

Mr. Browne: The United Kingdom Passport Service's biometric enrolment pilot records face, fingerprint and iris biometrics. Not all of these biometrics are recorded from each volunteer.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 24 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1419W, on identity cards, whether failure to produce an identity card as proposed by the draft Identity Cards Bill will provide grounds for arrest in circumstances where a non-arrestable offence is suspected. [176454]

Mr. Browne: The Government have made it clear that it will not be a requirement to carry an identity card or to produce a card to a police officer on demand and, as such, it will not be an offence for a person to fail to produce an identity card to a police constable. The police will not have power to arrest for failure to provide an identity card.

Police powers in England and Wales to identify a person arrested for a recordable offence are contained in section 25 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984. This section states that where a constable has reasonable grounds for suspecting that any offence which is not an arrestable offence has been committed or attempted, or is being committed or attempted, he may arrest the relevant person if it appears to him that the service of a summons is impractical or inappropriate because any of the general arrest conditions is satisfied. The general arrest conditions include where the name or address of the relevant person is unknown to, and cannot be readily ascertained by, the constable, or that the constable has reasonable grounds for doubting whether a name or address furnished by the relevant person is his real name. Similar provisions under different statutes apply in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

These powers will be unaffected by the introduction of an identity card. As at present with existing documents, people will be free to produce an identity card on a voluntary basis (if they have one) to a police officer or to any other official as a means of establishing their identity, but will not be compelled to do so.

Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will summarise the evaluation report produced by Oxford University on the Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme. [177898]

Paul Goggins: The evaluation report is in its final stages of preparation. We expect it to be ready for publication shortly. Copies of the summary will be sent to my hon. Friend and placed in the Library and on the Youth Justice Board website.

Mr. Akezhan Kazhegeldin

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) whether Mr. Akezhan Kazhegeldin, the former Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan, is permitted to hold any employment in the UK; and whether he receives financial support from the British Government; [176353]

(2) what representations he has received from Interpol on the Government's decision to grant leave to remain in the UK for Mr. Akezhan Kazhegeldin, the former Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan. [176625]

Mr. Browne: I wrote to the hon. Member on 15 June 2004.

Neighbourhood Watch

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received regarding the financial position of the National Neighbourhood Watch Association; what funds have been made available to the Association; what assessment he has made of the Association's ability to continue its work; if he will publish the audit of the Association undertaken by his Department; what steps he is taking to assist the Association in maintaining its support to local neighbourhood watches; and what other arrangements he is putting in place to maintain support to local neighbourhood watches. [178234]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 14 June 2004]:* My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary has received representations from 32 Members of Parliament and 55 members of the public about the financial position of the National Neighbourhood Watch Association (NNWA).

£350,000 of public funds were made available to the Association in 2003.

The NNWA is an independent organisation itself responsible for assessing its capabilities.

The audit was not intended for publication. Copies have been supplied to the NNWA and they may publish the report if they wish to.

The National Association informed us in November 2003 that, until further notice, it would cease most of its support for local associations and concentrate on its commercial activities.

The main support to local Neighbourhood Watch schemes is in the form of partnership working from the police, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, and the community safety departments of local authorities. We have asked police forces to ensure these arrangements are robust. We are also examining provision of website and advice line support.

Home Office support for local schemes will continue unchanged. This includes the printing and distributing of Neighbourhood Watch publications worth £100,000 per annum. It also provides training materials like the "Crime Reduction Basics" and "Passport to Crime Reduction" toolkits, of which over 6,000 were sent to local schemes in December 2003.

The Home Office is currently piloting a new quarterly community safety magazine called "The Word", with a section dedicated to Neighbourhood Watch, which will in future go out nationally.

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which Home Office *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials had contact with the National Neighbourhood Watch Association over the Association's attempts to use the Neighbourhood Watch logo in connection with private sector sponsorship; and if he will make a statement. [178412]

Ms Blears: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary has corresponded with the National Neighbourhood Watch Association and officials from the Crime Reduction Directorate of the Home Office and Treasury Solicitors have met them and corresponded with them on a number of occasions.

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what restrictions he has placed on the use of the National Neighbourhood Watch Association logo. [178574]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 14 June 2004]:* The National Neighbourhood Watch Association logo is a variant of the Neighbourhood Watch logo, which is Crown copyright. The National Neighbourhood Watch Association has registered the Neighbourhood Watch logos as its own trademarks and the Home Office is currently holding discussions with the Association to recover them and to agree how they may be used by the Association in future.

Personal Identification Project

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals have had their data used in the UK Passport Service's Personal Identification Project; how individuals are recruited for the project; and how their consent is obtained. [172401]

Mr. Browne: Since the start of the trial in Glasgow in October 2003 there have been 117,427—1 October 2003 to 10 May 2004—applications processed through the Personal Identity Project system.

All application packs for the Glasgow catchment area (Scotland and Kent) have supplementary forms included; these forms inform applicants of the trial and the use of the data they submit. In the final section of the form the applicant is requested to sign giving consent for the data supplied to be used in the identity search as described in the guidance notes.

Special Constables

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much capacity building funding for the recruitment of special constables was made available to police forces in each year since its inception. [178787]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 14 June 2004]:* The Specials' capacity building funding was announced in December 2003 and is in its first year. It is designed to assist Forces implement good practice, improving the recruitment, management and deployment of Special Constables.

All 43 Police Forces in England and Wales submitted proposals. The following table shows the allocation made to Forces, covering the first 12 months of the scheme.

Force	*Total (£)*
Avon and Somerset	70,000
Bedfordshire	69,859
Cambridgeshire	70,000
Cheshire	70,000
City of London	70,000
Cleveland	70,000
Cumbria	65,316
Derbyshire	63,934
Devon and Cornwall	39,892
Dorset	70,000
Durham	66,820
Dyfed Powys	70,000
Essex	70,000
Gloucestershire	67,194
Greater Manchester	39,999
Gwent	67,516
Hampshire	54,684
Hertfordshire	62,453
Humberside	70,000
Kent	70,000
Lancashire	70,000
Leicestershire	70,000
Lincolnshire	23,134
Merseyside	65,434
Metropolitan Police	70,000
Norfolk	69,500
Northamptonshire	70,000
Northumbria	70,000
North Wales	63,710
North Yorkshire	70,000
Nottinghamshire	62,000
South Wales	69,006
South Yorkshire	63,400
Staffordshire	39,818
Suffolk	65,402
Surrey	70,000
Sussex	69,898
Thames Valley	69,779
Warwickshire	62,342
West Mercia	66,070
West Midlands	69,960
West Yorkshire	70,000
Wiltshire	69,950
Totals	2,787,070

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Afghanistan

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the *(a)* successes and *(b)* failures of the national drugs strategy in Afghanistan. [178028]

Mr. Rammell: President Karzai adopted the Afghan National Drug Control Strategy in May 2003. Its aim is to eliminate opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan by 2013. I set out to the House on 9 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 124–27WH the action in hand to deliver that strategy and made clear that the UK, as lead nation, remains committed to supporting its implementation.

In the first year of implementation of the strategy, the basic counter narcotics structures have been put in place: drug control legislation, a Counter Narcotics Directorate, a Special Narcotics Force, the Counter Narcotics Police and a central eradication capability. Work is also in hand to develop alternative livelihoods for farmers dependent on opium poppy cultivation. These measures provide a sound basis for the future development of robust institutions and programmes to combat opium production and trafficking. Progress remains linked to the wider security situation in Afghanistan and to the implementation of other areas of institution building such as policing and judicial systems.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what resources are being made available to monitor the elections in Afghanistan. [178312]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Joint Elections Management Body comprised of the Afghan Transitional Administration and UN representatives, and chaired by Interior Minister Jalali, is responsible for election preparations. As part of its electoral support plans, the UN Development Programme intends to establish an "Observation Office" to facilitate national and international election observation. The Office is intended to support information exchange between Afghan and international observers and other interested parties; provide briefing packages for observers; and develop training materials for Afghan observers.

We are currently discussing with EU partners and the European Commission a range of measures to support the elections, including deployment of monitors and advisers. There are likely to be observer teams from a number of other countries. Work is also in hand to develop domestic monitoring capacity. Afghan civil society organisations involved in this have formed a "Core Group" to co-ordinate domestic monitoring activities.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the size of the British monitoring team during the elections in Afghanistan will be. [178313]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We have not yet decided on the size or nature of any UK input into the international monitoring effort for the forthcoming elections in Afghanistan. But we are looking at this, including in the light of current discussions with EU and other partners.

Zimbabwe

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he will authorise the entry of Gideon Gono, governor of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, to the United Kingdom; and if he will make a statement. [179037]

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs for what reason Dr. Gideon Gono, Governor of Zimbabwe's Reserve Bank, was not prevented from entering the UK under the terms of EU sanctions. [178767]

Mr. Mullin: Because he is not on the list of individuals subject to an EU travel ban and we see no advantage in acting unilaterally.

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of reports of involvement in illegal foreign exchange deals involving the Zimbabwe regime of Dr. Gideon Gono, Governor of Zimbabwe's Reserve Bank. [178768]

Mr. Mullin: We are aware of these reports. Zimbabwean foreign exchange regulations are a matter for the Zimbabwe Government, and allegations of corruption are a matter for their police.

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received that Gideon Gono, Governor of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe *(a)* is a fundraiser for ZANU PF and *(b)* intends to enter the United Kingdom for fundraising purposes. [179036]

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the fund-raising visit to the UK of Dr. Gideon Gono, Governor of Zimbabwe's Reserve Bank. [178766]

Mr. Mullin: We understand that during Dr. Gono's visit he is encouraging Zimbabwean émigrés to remit money to Zimbabwe through the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe rather than through other means.

Bangladesh

Mr. Lyons: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Bangladesh on protecting the Ahmadiyya Muslim community in that country. [178133]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We continue to be concerned about the situation of Ahmadiyya Muslims in Bangladesh, and raise this regularly with the Bangladeshi Government. I did so with the Bangladeshi High Commissioner in London during his introductory call in January. The British High Commission in Dhaka raises the subject regularly, most recently when our High Commissioner met the Bangladeshi Foreign Minister on 19 May. My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn), raised our concerns about the general law and order situation with the Bangladeshi Prime Minister on 25 May in Shanghai.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he is making to the Bangladesh Government concerning the security situation in the country with reference to attacks on and harassment of opposition party members; and if he will make a statement. [178187]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: I discussed the worrying political situation in Bangladesh with the Bangladeshi Finance Minister Saifur Rahman in London on 10 March. I stressed the importance of all parties adopting a constructive approach and working together to allow Bangladesh to address the key issues it faces. Officials at our High Commission in Dhaka regularly raise our concerns about human rights and law and order with the Bangladeshi Government, most recently when our High Commissioner called on the Foreign Minister on 19 May. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn) also raised these issues with the Bangladeshi Prime Minister on 25 May in Shanghai.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the bomb attack in Bangladesh which injured the United Kingdom High Commissioner. [178188]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: As my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary said in his press statement of 21 May, we were deeply shocked to hear of the events in Sylhet earlier that day in which three people died and some 50 were injured including our High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Anwar Choudhury. A copy of the press statement is available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website: www.fco.gov.uk/policy/news/press-releases. We extend our sympathies to all the victims and their families. Mr. Choudhury was visited in hospital by the Foreign Secretary and I visited twice. I am plesed to report that Anwar is recovering well and has now been discharged from hospital. Officers from the Metropolitan police visited Sylhet soon after the event in order to assist the Bangladeshi police with the investigation, which is still on-going. We are very grateful to the Bangladeshi authorities for the support we have received, and will, of course, be following the progress of the investigation closely.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the assassination of Bangladesh member of parliament Ahsanullah Master. [178189]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We noted with concern the murder on 7 May of Ahsanullah Master MP. We understand that a police investigation has been launched, and urge the Bangladeshi authorities to make every effort to bring those responsible to justice. We also urge the main political parties in Bangladesh not to let this assassination worsen their relationship. We encourage all parties to adopt a constructive approach and work together to help Bangladesh to address the challenges that it faces.

Conflict Prevention Pool

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government will be included in the Conflict Prevention Pool; and what the priorities are of the Conflict Prevention Pool. [178891]

Mr. Rammell: A review of the Government's work on Conflict Prevention in 1999–2000 concluded that delivery would be improved by bringing together in a more co-ordinated way the existing activities of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), the Department for International Development (DfID) and the Ministry of Defence (MOD) in this field. The Government therefore set up joint FCO/DfID/MOD Africa and Global Conflict Prevention Pools in 2001.

The pools were set up with the aim of reducing the number of people around the world whose lives are affected by violent conflict and, ultimately, of cutting the number of conflicts that occur.

Activities of these two pools seek to harness the expertise available within the three Departments across a wide range of sectors including development, security reform, public administration, good policing and equitable justice systems.

By 2006, DfID, FCO and MOD, together and with others, will work to:

(i) resolve existing violent conflicts and prevent new conflicts in priority countries and regions eg Afghanistan, Balkans, Former Soviet Union, Middle and Near East, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Sierra Leone, Great Lakes, Sudan, Angola, and Nigeria

(ii) address the national and regional causes of conflict by:

- strengthening local conflict management eg through improved governance and security sector reform in priority countries and regions
- improving local peace support capacity in co-operation with international partners eg the development of a GS-Africa Peace Support Operations plan

(iii) improve the international community's response to conflict by:

- strengthening UN Conflict Management capacity eg improving peacekeeping deployments
- mobilising and supporting coherent bilateral and international action at UN, G8, EU, Commonwealth, and other forums including NEPAD
- implementing agreements to reduce the proliferation of small arms and light weapons eg international and national action plans

(iv) tackle the Economic and Financial Causes of Conflict eg by mobilising national and international agreement to increase oil revenue transparency and corporate social responsibility.

East Timor-Australia

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what line the United Kingdom recognises as the boundary line between East Timor and Australia. [178473]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: There is currently no agreed maritime boundary between East Timor and Australia. We hope they will work together to find a mutually acceptable solution. We welcome reported comments by the Prime Minister of East Timor, Mr. Alkatiri, that East Timor is "open to creative solutions" and by the Australian Foreign Minister James Downer that Australia is "open to fresh ideas".

International Criminal Court

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make it his policy to oppose the renewal of UN Security Council Resolution 1487; and if he will make a statement. [177720]

Mr. Rammell: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to my right hon. Friend the Member for Leeds, West (Mr. Battle) on 7 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 58W.

Iraq

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what measures are in place to help protect Iraq's cultural heritage after the planned official handover of power in Iraq on 30 June. [178126]

Mr. Rammell: Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) advisers to the Iraqi Ministry of Culture have been working hard to enable the Ministry to assume responsibility for its own administration. It has now done this and we welcome the reappointment of Mufid al-Jazairi as the Minister.

The Ministry has begun implementation of an Archaeological Site Protection Plan and the CPA and Iraq State Board of Antiquities and Heritage are working together to build an archaeological site patrol force.

In the past year the CPA has also instituted security measures at the Iraq Museum, Baghdad, and believes that these measures will suffice to protect it in future. Security upgrades have been undertaken in the Mosul Museum. No other archaeological museums now contain original objects.

We expect to see future exchanges between Iraqi and international conservationists highlight further areas for co-operation between experts.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has asked the United States Central Intelligence Agency if it will give permission for the release of communications made by the CIA to Her Majesty's Government in respect of reservations held by the CIA over claims that Iraq had sought uranium from Niger, following the public testimony by the CIA Director George Tenet on 11 July 2003. [178727]

Mr. Straw: I am withholding details of intelligence exchanges with the CIA under exemptions 1 *(b)* and *(c)* of Part 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his written answer of 26 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1636W, on the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), whether, in his meeting with the President of the ICRC in Geneva on 18 March, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs *(a)* was made aware of and *(b)* raised the issue of allegations concerning the treatment of prisoners in Iraq by Coalition forces other than British forces. [179099]

Mr. Straw: The President of the ICRC, Dr. Kellenberger did mention briefly to my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mr. Rammell) in their meeting on 18 March that the February ICRC report contained allegations concerning treatment of detainees by forces other than UK forces, though naturally the part of their discussion which covered detainees in Iraq focused on specific allegations against UK forces. The Minister discussed the concerns raised by Dr. Kellenberger with officials on his return to London. Officials had already received assurances that US investigations were under way into allegations of abuse of detainees at Abu Ghraib prison.

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 17 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 748–49W, on Iraq, what inquiries are being conducted by the Coalition Provisional Authority into the prison facilities specified in the International Committee of the Red Cross report. [175773]

Mr. Rammell: The Coalition Provisional Authority is not responsible for the US and UK detention facilities which were the subject of the ICRC report.

Israel

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what consequences beyond public censure the Government has raised with Israel in respect of alleged breaches of the Geneva conventions. [178582]

Mr. Rammell: We have raised Israeli violations of the Fourth Geneva Convention repeatedly both in public and in private, bilaterally and in multilateral fora such as the United Nations and at the Conference of States Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention held in Geneva in 2001. Respect for international humanitarian law is an essential feature of our efforts to bring peace to the region based on the roadmap.

The most serious consequence of such breaches is their negative impact on prospects for achieving the lasting peace which most Israelis want to see.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has to report human rights abuses committed by Israel in Gaza to the EU Association Council. [178796]

Mr. Rammell: Article 2 of the EU/Israel Association Agreement states that "Relations between the Parties, as well as all the provisions of the Agreement itself, shall be based on respect for human rights and democratic principles, which guides their internal and international policy and constitutes an essential element of this Agreement."

Where we have concerns over Israeli actions on human rights grounds we raise these concerns with the Israeli government both as the UK and through the EU. Following the recent violence in Gaza, EU Foreign Ministers said that Israeli Defence Force actions were "disproportionate and in conflict with international law and also with Israel's obligations under the Roadmap."

The EU also uses the opportunity to raise issues of concern, including human rights, at the EU/Israel Association Council. The EU will consider in the autumn what issues to raise at the EU/Israel Association Council scheduled to be held at the end of this year.

Middle East

Mr. Lyons: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has to meet the *(a)* Palestinian Authority and *(b)* Israeli Government to discuss peace in the Middle East. [178132]

Mr. Rammell: We are in constant contact with both parties at all levels. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and my noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean will continue to meet senior representatives of the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli Government as appropriate.

Mr. Lyons: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will continue to promote the roadmap as the way forward in the Middle East. [178190]

Mr. Rammell: Yes. The Government are committed to progress towards peace in the Middle East based on the Quartet's (UN, EU, US, Russia) roadmap.

Ministerial Expenses

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether *(a)* his Department and *(b)* other Government Departments paid for travelling and other expenses in connection with the attendance by the Minister for Europe at meetings in the course of the composition and signing of the Party of European Socialists document entitled "Political Declaration, High Level Policy Group on Globalisation: Europe 2004, Changing the Future"; whether he was accompanied to those meetings by officials from his Department or any other Government Department; and whether any officials from his Department or any other Government Department arranged the Minister for Europe's travel plans. [178746]

Mr. Straw: No.

Saudi Arabia

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what legal assistance was given by his Department to the five Britons arrested in relation to bombing incidents in Saudi Arabia in 2000 during their incarceration in that country; and what the cost of that assistance was. [178936]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 15 June 2004]:* The men detained in Saudi Arabia, as in other consular cases, were put in contact with local lawyers who provided independent legal assistance. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office did not provide any legal assistance, nor did it provide funding for legal assistance, but we did provide the most extensive consular support.

Weapons of Mass Destruction

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which international treaty to which the United Kingdom is party *(a)* gives legal underpinning to the possession of nuclear weapons by the United Kingdom and *(b)* permits the modernisation of the United Kingdom's nuclear weapons of mass destruction. [178728]

Mr. MacShane: The United Kingdom is recognised as a Nuclear Weapons State in accordance with the definition in Article IX(3) of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The UK is satisfied that its possession and maintenance of its minimum nuclear deterrent is in compliance with international law.

HEALTH

Accident and Emergency (Merseyside)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many consultants there were on average in accident and emergency departments in each hospital in Merseyside in each of the last three years. [177856]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Administration Budget

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made towards the 5 per cent. reduction in real terms in his Department's administration budget by 2008 announced by the Chancellor in the House on 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 331. [176507]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The real terms reduction of 5 per cent. or more will be a central feature of the public spending settlements for 2006–08, to be announced in detail later this year.

Air Fresheners

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent research has been conducted into the impact upon *(a)* indoor air quality and *(b)* human health of the use of air fresheners; what advice has been given to the public relating to their use; and if he will make a statement. [177478]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department has not undertaken any studies on the effects of the use of air fresheners on health or on indoor air quality.

Aneurisms

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the position regarding screening for aneurisms. [178314]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The United Kingdom national screening committee (NSC) makes recommendations to Ministers on all aspects of screening programmes. It is currently considering the feasibility of implementing a screening programme for abdominal aortic aneurysms, including resource costs of screening and of surgery. This follows a multi-centre study funded by the Medical Research Council. The NSC is expected to advise the Government later in the year.

Anti-depressant Drugs

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will set a date by which the current Review of SSRI and related anti-depressant drugs will be completed and published; and what the reasons are for the delay in completing it. [178235]

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when the review of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors and related anti-depressant drugs will be *(a)* completed and *(b)* published; [178458]

(2) what the reasons are for delays in completing the review of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors and related anti-depressants; [178468]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 15 June 2004]:* The review of the safety of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors by the Committee on Safety of Medicines' expert working group has taken longer than expected because of the need to examine a large amount of data from a wide variety of new and existing sources. The expert working group expects to publish its report later this year.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the best estimate of *(a)* the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency and *(b)* the Committee on the Safety of Medicines of the incidence of withdrawal reactions to Seroxat was in (i) July 1997 and (ii) July 2003; and if he will make a statement on the figures. [178236]

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the reasons were for the differences in the best estimate of the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency and the Committee on Safety of Medicines of the incidence of withdrawal reactions to Seroxat in July 1997 and July 2003. [178339]

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate was made by the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency of the incidence of withdrawal reactions to Seroxat in *(a)* July 1997 and *(b)* July 2003. [178522]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 15 June 2004]:* Data were not available in July 1997 to allow a good estimation of the incidence of withdrawal reactions with paroxetine by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) or the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM). In July 2003, the best estimate of the incidence of withdrawal reactions by the MHRA and CSM, based on analyses of clinical trials was that 25 per cent. of patients had experienced symptoms on withdrawal of paroxetine. Information about the potential for paroxetine to cause withdrawal reactions has been included in the product information since the time of licensing and has been updated to take account of the new data on incidence.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he expects the current review of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors and related anti-depressant drugs to be completed and published; and for what reasons this review has not been published earlier. [178721]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The review of the safety of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors by the Committee on Safety of Medicines' expert working group has taken longer than expected because of the need to examine a large amount of data from a wide variety of new and existing sources. The expert working group expects to publish its report later this year.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance his Department has issued in relation to the prescription of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors. [178960]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 15 June 2004]:* Guidance on how to use selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) safely and effectively is provided in the product information for prescribers, the summary of product characteristics, and in the patient information leaflet which accompanies the medicine. These documents are authorised by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) at the time of licensing and updated through the life of the product as new information on risks and benefits emerges. Information on prescribing is also provided in the British National Formulary, which is sent to all doctors in the national health service.

As with all medicines, the safety of SSRIs is continually monitored by the MHRA with independent expert advice from the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM). Articles have been published in the MHRA/CSM drug safety bulletin, "Current Problems in Pharmacovigilance in 1993, 2000 and 2003". These articles alerted prescribers to safety issues with SSRIs, in particular the risk of withdrawal reactions and the need to monitor carefully patients at risk of suicidal behaviour. The September 2003 edition of "Current Problems in Pharmacovigilance" contained a fact sheet for patients to aid discussions with their doctor about the appropriate use and possible side effects of their medicine.

The safety of SSRIs is currently undergoing intensive review by an expert working group of the CSM. Advice has been communicated to doctors and patients as each stage of the review has been completed. In December 2003, the CSM issued advice on the use of SSRIs in children and adolescents and published summaries of the clinical trial data on which this advice was based on the CSM website. In March 2004, the CSM issued a reminder to doctors on the recommended dose of paroxetine (Seroxat) in the treatment of depressive illness.

Autistic Spectrum Disorder

Mrs. Browning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment his Department has made of the long-term effects of neuroleptic drugs given to people who have been misdiagnosed as schizophrenic. [178956]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 15 June 2004]:* The Department has not made an assessment of the long-term effects of neuroleptic drugs given to people who have been misdiagnosed as schizophrenic.

Breastmilk Substitutes

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the health effects of feeding babies breastmilk substitutes; and if he will make a statement. [176766]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* The Department has not made any assessment of the health effects of feeding babies breastmilk substitutes.

The Department recommends breastfeeding as the best form of nutrition for infants as it provides all the nutrients a baby needs for the first six months of life and has positive health benefits for both mother and baby in the short and longer term. Breastfed infants are five times less likely to be admitted to hospital with infections such as gastro-enteritis in the first year of life and may be less likely to become obese in later childhood. Breastfeeding is also advantageous for maternal health. Longer-term breastfeeding helps mothers to return to their pre-pregnancy weight and there is a reduced incidence of pre-menopausal breast, ovarian and endometrial cancers.

Cannabis

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what campaigns have been launched by his Department and what funding has been granted to warn teenagers about links between cannabis use and mental illness. [178346]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The FRANK campaign is a £3 million a year three-year joint initiative from the Department of Health and the Home Office and is supported by the Department for Education and Skills. Launched in May 2003, FRANK aims to inform young people and their parents, carers and families about the effects and risks of taking illicit drugs. In addition, FRANK gives people advice, support and provides details of drug services. The campaign's primary focus is on Class A drugs, in line with the Government's updated drugs strategy. The risks associated with cannabis use, including possible mental health illness, are also documented.

A Home Office-led £1 million information campaign started in January 2004 to inform the public about the changes to the law on cannabis. This included radio and newspaper adverts, leaflets, posters, postcards and education packs for schools.

Although no specific funding has been granted to warn teenagers about possible links between cannabis use and mental illness, the Department has funded a new leaflet on the adverse health effects of cannabis, and includes a section on mental health. This leaflet is currently being printed.

Correspondence

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the letter of 27 May 2004 from the Minister of State to the hon. Member for Wycombe, if he will ensure that the chair of the Thames Valley Strategic Health Authority writes to the hon. Member for Wycombe with the information requested by 18 June. [178096]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 10 June 2004]:* The Thames Valley Strategic Health Authority has advised that the chair of the strategic health authority will provide information to the hon. Member by 18 June.

Delayed Discharge Fines

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which wards in hospitals in West Sussex are not liable for delayed discharge fines. [178307]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Patients for whom delayed discharge charges are currently payable under the Community Care (Delayed Discharges etc.) Act are those receiving acute care. The definition of acute care is based upon the patient, not the hospital bed. Therefore, there are no wards which are liable for delayed discharge fines.

Dentistry

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when primary care trusts will take control of the dental services budget to enable them to carry out their duty of care to deliver primary dental services under the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003. [176705]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The £1.3 billion financial resources (2003–04) currently held centrally will be transferred to primary care trusts to coincide with the implementation of the new contractual framework for national health service dentistry. Following a consultation with representative bodies of the dental profession on our "Framework Proposals for Primary Care Dental Services in England", we are currently considering whether any revision to the original timetable of April 2005 is necessary.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding has been provided to NHS dentists in the Adur, Arun and Worthing primary care trust area in each of the last three years. [178304]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The gross and net fees paid to dentists for the provision of general dental services (GDS) for 2001–02, 2002–03 and 2003–04 is shown in the table.

Before October 2002, Adur, Arun and Worthing was part of the West Sussex health authority area. These figures exclude some payments to dentists such as commitment payments, maternity and seniority payments as well as superannuation payments made on their behalf.

National health service dental service: gross and net fees paid in the GDS for the years 2001–02, 2002–03 and 2003–04

£ million

Year	Health authority (HA)/ primary care trust (PCT)	Gross fees	Net fees[1]
2001–02 to first half of 2002–03			
Year ending March 2002	West Sussex HA	31.6	23.4
April 2002 to September 2002	West Sussex HA	16.0	11.9
2002–03—second half to 2003–04			
October 2002 to March 2003	Adur, Arun and Worthing PCT	3.3	2.2
Year ending March 2004	Adur, Arun and Worthing PCT	7.0	4.5

[1] Excludes patient charge.

Note:

Community, personal and hospital dental services have not been included in this table as these are not funded separately from other services.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have access to NHS dentists in the Adur, Arun and Worthing primary care trust area; and what percentage of the potential target group this figure represents. [178305]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are 99,000 patients registered with the general dental service (GDS) dentists in the Adur, Arun and Worthing Primary Care Trust area at 31 March 2004.

This represents 46 per cent., of the population of Adur, Arun and Worthing.

Registration numbers cover patients who have registered with a GDS dentist and attended the dentist within the past 15 months. They do not include some patients who choose to attend less often.

National health service dental services are also provided by the community dental service, personal dental service, salaried service of the GDS and the hospital dental service. These services do not require the patient to be registered with a dentist.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he is taking to *(a)* support and *(b)* promote NHS dentistry in Crosby. [177857]

Mr. Hutton: The proposals in the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003 in relation to primary dental services represent the most radical reform of national health service dentistry since 1948. They will give a better deal for patients, for dentists and for the NHS. Under these proposals, primary care trusts (PCTs) have a duty to secure the provision of primary dental services.

Nationally, we have provided new investment totalling £90 million over the last year. £59 million will support access, and strategic health authorities (SHAs) have been advised of their shares and are working with their primary care trusts to address access issues. £30 million is to support information technology and the balance of £1 million will support organisational development locally.

The PCTs across Merseyside are working closely with the Cheshire and Merseyside SHA supported by the shadow Special Health Authority (dentistry) to improve local dental access using their share of the access funds: some £2.64 million in 2004–05.

NHS Direct receives about 19,000 calls per month related to dentistry (at March 2004). Reports from the NHS suggest that about 91 per cent, of callers to NHS Direct are being advised of available sources of NHS dentistry within locally agreed standards.

The number of dentists working in the General Dental Services (GDS) is increasing. On 30 March 2004, there were 19,313 dentists in England, up from 16,728 in 1997. Activity in the GDS has been stable. Around 60 per cent., of all general practice dentists offer 90 per cent., or more NHS care. Some 25 per cent., of all general practice dentists offer NHS care exclusively.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average distance for people to access NHS dentists is in *(a)* Merseyside and *(b)* Crosby. [177859]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The average distance to a General Dental Service surgery is 0.54 miles for people living in Merseyside and 0.34 miles for people living in Crosby.

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when discussions with the Governments of *(a)* Poland, *(b)* Germany, *(c)* Denmark and *(d)* Spain on the recruitment of dentists from their countries began; [178270]

(2) if he will list the recruitment agencies used to recruit dentists from *(a)* Poland, *(b)* Germany, *(c)* Denmark and *(d)* Spain; and what the cost of using them has been to date; [178272]

(3) if he will list the countries with which his Department is in discussion regarding the recruitment of overseas dentists to work in the UK; and how far advanced these discussions are in each case; [178274]

(4) pursuant to the Oral statement by the Minister of State, the hon. Member for Doncaster, Central of 11 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 22WH, on dentists, how many dentists he expects to recruit from *(a)* Poland, *(b)* Germany, *(c)* Denmark and *(d)* Spain this year. [178278]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A Government to Government agreement exists to recruit healthcare professionals from Spain. On this basis, plans are currently being developed to recruit dentists but no assessment of numbers has been made.

The Department has signed an agreement to recruit at least 110 dentists from Poland and other parts of Europe via methods consulting. My right hon. Friend, the Minister of State for Health (Mr. Hutton) met with Polish Ministers in March to discuss matters of mutual interest. Discussions on the recruitment of dentists have since been followed up at official level.

Earlier this month, the Department, at the request of the Danish employment service, provided information to Danish dentists wishing to work in England.

Departmental officials met with their Indian counterparts in April and discussed how to improve the registration process for dentists who wish to practice in the United Kingdom.

The number of dentists to be recruited from Poland, Denmark and Spain is not yet known.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what complaints he has received from *(a)* EU countries and *(b)* non-EU countries about the active recruitment of overseas dentists; and if he will make a statement. [178409]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department is not aware of any complaints about the recruitment of overseas dentists.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the oral statement of the Minister of State, the hon. Member for Doncaster, Central (Ms Winterton), of 11 May, *Official Report*, column 22WH, how many overseas dentists he expects to start working in *(a)* the community dental service, *(b)* the general dental service and *(c)* hospital dental services; and if he will make a statement. [178566]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department's international recruitment campaign will focus on filling vacant posts within primary care dentistry. It is too soon to predict which parts of the national health service recruits will work in.

Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what support the Government are giving to drug and alcohol rehabilitation schemes in the community. [178158]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 14 June 2004]:* In 2001–02 the Government set up the National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse to increase both the quality and availability of drug treatment. At the same time the Government made substantial funding available for drug treatment through a new pooled drug treatment budget, which in 2004–05 had risen to £260 million, an increase of over 100 per cent. over 2001–02 levels.

In addition to the pooled drug treatment budget substantial national health service mainstream monies are available for the provision of drug treatment.

Alcohol services are largely funded through NHS mainstream monies but there are no central records of the total amount.

The Government also recently launched their alcohol strategy in March 2004, which includes within it a goal to improve the effectiveness of alcohol treatment services.

Drug Rehabilitation

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the current waiting time is for drug rehabilitation in Stroud for *(a)* detoxification and *(b)* recovery. [178466]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not collected centrally.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the throughput for individuals who have been accepted onto drug rehabilitation schemes in Stroud was in each of the last three years. [178467]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not available centrally.

Stroud is part of Gloucestershire drug action team. There were 1,073 people receiving drug treatment in Gloucestershire in 2000–01. These are the latest available data. Data broken down by drug action team for 2001–02 and 2002–03 have not yet been finalised and published.

Food Supplements Directive

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what recent representations he has received from Consumers for Health Choice in relation to the interpretation and implementation of the Food Supplements Directive; and if he will make a statement; [176536]

(2) what recent representations he has received from right hon. and hon. Members in relation to the Food Supplements Directive; and if he will make a statement. [176538]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Recently the Department has received numerous postcards relating to the Consumers for Health Choice campaign.

Between 1 March 2004 and 28 May 2004, 265 representations have been received from right hon. and hon. Members in relation to the Food Supplements Directive. This number includes both campaign postcards and non-campaign correspondence.

Framework Criteria

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what criteria are used to determine which conditions and treatments are assessed for the introduction of *(a)* national service frameworks, *(b)* policy frameworks and *(c)* National Institute for Clinical Excellence guidelines. [176881]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In selecting a topic for and developing and implementing a national service framework, account is taken of the importance of a health issue in terms of morbidity and mortality, the scope for service improvement and the capacity of the national health service and its partner agencies to implement the framework. Similar criteria determine the areas in which the Government choose to introduce major initiatives in other parts of health and social care policy.

The work programme for the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) is set by the Department, via the advisory committee for topic selection (ACTS). The ACTS consists of departmental policy officials, NICE, patient and professional groups and the pharmaceutical industry. Its role is to advise whether a topic is suitable

for an appraisal by NICE. The ACTS applies selection criteria agreed by Ministers and prioritises those proposals which meet the criteria. The key criteria are whether guidance would promote the best possible improvement in patient care given available resources, and whether NICE would be able to add value by issuing guidance.

General Practitioners

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the provision of 24 hour heart monitors to general practitioners' surgeries. [173635]

Miss Melanie Johnson: General practitioner practices make decisions about how they spend the income they receive, which will in some cases have been used to provide 24 hour heart monitors. In addition in 2002–03, £15 million was allocated to pay for cardiac equipment in primary care.

Gymnasiums (Mental Health Hospitals)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what gymnasium facilities are available in each mental health hospital in England. [178347]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not centrally available.

All new mental health buildings are designed to specific functional and space standards, which are provided in Health Building Notes (HBN).

HBN 35, "Accommodation for people with mental illness", acknowledges that physical exercise is important both as recreation and because of the positive link between physical and mental health. HBN 35 states that it is a local decision whether to provide a gymnasium or a fitness room.

Health Services (Rochdale)

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many senior citizens in Rochdale parliamentary constituency have access to free eye tests; and what percentage are *(a)* women and *(b)* from an ethnic minority; [178510]

(2) how many residents in Rochdale parliamentary constituency aged over 60 years have benefited from the abolition of charges for eye tests; and what percentage were *(a)* women and *(b)* from an ethnic minority. [178511]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data for the number of sight tests by constituency, senior citizens, gender or by ethnic origin are not collected centrally.

In 2002–03, the total number of national health service sight tests paid for by the Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority for patients in the aged 60 and over category was 189,900. The total number eligible for a free sight test for those aged 60 and over was 493,100. Sight tests cannot be equated to the numbers of patients.

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* therapists and *(b)* scientists were located in Rochdale in each of the last seven years. [178513]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested. The table shows the number of qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff.

NHS hospital and community health services: Qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff in the Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority area as at 30 September each specified year

Headcount

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Bury and Rochdale Health Authority	1	1	11	12	10	[1]—	[1]—
Bury Health Care NHS Trust	216	225	230	242	267	[1]—	[1]—
North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	286	267	272	275	256	[1]—	[1]—
Oldham NHS Trust	347	346	360	393	417	[1]—	[1]—
Rochdale Health Care NHS Trust	244	249	243	259	308	[1]—	[1]—
Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	900	853
Rochdale PCT	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	137	144
Pennine Care NHS Trust	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	146	187

[1] Not applicable

Source:

Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census

Mental Health Act

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many officials in his Department at Grade 7 and above have worked on the reform of the Mental Health Act 1983 since May 1997. [178752]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A number of officials across the Department have contributed to work on the reform of the 1983 Mental Health Act since 1997. Quantifying this information by grade could be achieved only at disproportionate cost.

Mental Illness

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps his Department is taking to ensure that drug treatments for patients with mental health illnesses are prescribed at the correct dosage; and what measures are taken to monitor patients for harmful side effects. [178145]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 15 June 2004]:* The safety of all medicines in clinical practice is continually monitored by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM). Health professionals are asked to report any suspected side

effects to the MHRA/CSM through the Yellow Card scheme. When a new side effect for a medicine is identified, action is taken to inform prescribers and to minimise the risk to patients.

Where specific monitoring of patients is required to ensure safe use of a medicine, this is referred to in the product information for prescribers (the summary of product characteristics) and in the patient information leaflet.

MRSA

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in each of the last two years have fallen ill owing to MRSA-related conditions contracted as a result of a stay in hospital in each health service area. [177721]

Miss Melanie Johnson: This information is not collected centrally. Available data from the national mandatory methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus* aureus (MRSA) blood stream infections (bacteraemias) system is shown in the table.

Mandatory methicillin resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) blood stream infections (bacteraemias)

Strategic health authority	*April 2002–March 2003*	*April 2003–March 2004*[1]
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	389	344
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	173	148
Birmingham and the Black Country	455	440
Cheshire and Merseyside	344	320
County Durham and Tees Valley	155	122
Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire	182	202
Cumbria and Lancashire	215	235
Dorset and Somerset	139	100
Essex	149	148
Greater Manchester	375	410
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	200	213
Kent and Medway	200	203
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	189	182
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	392	388
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	151	197
North Central London	376	364
North East London	246	253
North West London	387	376
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	225	267
Shropshire and Staffordshire	175	240
South East London	406	397
South West London	244	267
South West Peninsula	210	259
South Yorkshire	156	198
Surrey and Sussex	346	383

Mandatory methicillin resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) blood stream infections (bacteraemias)

Strategic health authority	*April 2002–March 2003*	*April 2003–March 2004*[1]
Thames Valley	243	262
Trent	305	337
West Yorkshire	357	392

[1] These data are provisional.
Source:
Health Protection Agency

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases of MRSA were reported in each month over the last two years in each health trust. [177988]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Annual data are available from the mandatory Methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) blood stream (bacteraemia) infections surveillance system that started in April 2001 at the Department's website at http://www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/06/39/46/04063946.pdf.

Natural Products Show (Olympia)

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what strategy the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency adopted in terms of *(a)* numbers of officials and *(b)* method of approach for visits to stands at the Natural Products Show at Olympia on 5 April. [176963]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The medicines borderline section of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency was given six free tickets to the Natural Products Show by an industry trade association with whom the MHRA meets on regular basis. The visit was intended to help inform the Medicines Borderline Section of market trends and developments, and to help provide information to the sector. During the visit the staff had informal discussions with exhibitors about the presentation of a number of unlicensed products making illegal medicinal claims with the exhibitors and some presentational material was taken away.

NHS Admissions (Burnley)

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many elective admissions to the NHS there were in Burnley in each of the last five years. [167946]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected centrally on a constituency basis. Information relating to national health service organisations serving the Burnley area is shown in the table.

Patients waiting for elective inpatient admission

			Patients waiting for admission by months waiting						
Month-end	*NHS Trust*	*Total number of patients*	*Less than three months*	*Three to five months*	*Six to eight months*	*Nine to 11 months*	*12–14 months*	*15–17 months*	*18+ months*
March 1997	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	4,903	2,638	1,201	668	396	—	—	—
March 1997	Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	5,840	3,126	1,677	786	251	—	—	—
March 1998	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	6,157	3,061	1,470	968	625	33	—	—
March 1998	Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	6,569	3,224	1,087	1,087	412	2	—	—
	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	4,895	2,908	1,092	546	288	61	—	—
March 1999	Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	5,357	3,231	1,103	691	318	14	—	—

Patients waiting for elective inpatient admission

Month-end	NHS Trust	Total number of patients	Patients waiting for admission by months waiting: Less than three months	Three to five months	Six to eight months	Nine to 11 months	12–14 months	15–17 months	18+ months
March 2000	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	4,803	2,458	1,190	639	377	120	19	—
March 2000	Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	5,084	2,977	1,202	606	251	48	—	—
March 2001	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	4,554	2,335	1,207	686	326	—	—	—
March 2001	Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	5,032	2,924	1,283	593	232	—	—	—
March 2002	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	4,749	2,266	1,165	778	405	135	—	—
March 2002	Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	4,883	2,532	1,303	692	356	—	—	—
March 2003	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	4,595	2,219	1,223	761	392	—	—	—
March 2003	Blackburn Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	3,968	2,375	1,078	432	83	—	—	—
February-2004	East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust	8,451	4,864	2,354	960	273	—	—	—

Notes:
East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust was formed on 1 April 2003 from the merger of Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Healthcare and the acute services of Burnley Healthcare. The Mental Illness and Old Age Psychiatry services of Burnley Healthcare transferred to Lancashire Care NHS Trust on 1 April 2002.
Source:
DH form KH07 and Monthly Monitoring

NHS Admissions (Preston)

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the levels of elective admissions to the NHS in Preston in the past five years. [168108]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected centrally on a constituency basis. Information relating to national health service organisations serving the Preston area is shown in the table.

Patients waiting for elective in-patient admission

Month-end	NHS Trust	Total number of patients	Patients waiting for admission by months waiting: Less than 3 months	3–5 months	6–8 months	9–11 months	12–14 months	15–17 months	18+ months
March 1997	Chorley and South Kibble NHS Trust	1,857	1,079	463	249	66	—	—	—
March 1997	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	8,970	4,137	2,352	1,445	1,000	18	15	3
March 1998	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	2,121	1,299	537	183	102	—	—	—
March 1998	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	8,500	4,079	1,969	1,334	787	257	74	—
March 1999	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	2,051	1,126	527	248	132	17	1	—
March 1999	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	7,602	4,154	1,729	1,043	544	132	—	—
March 2000	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	1,967	1,228	453	186	90	10	—	—
March 2000	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	7,025	4,110	1,701	853	359	2	—	—
March 2001	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	8,926	5,559	1,987	1,002	378	—	—	—
March 2002	Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	8,891	5,565	2,055	995	276	—	—	—
March 2003	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	8,445	5,473	2,096	711	165	—	—	—
February 2004	Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	8,657	5,642	2,224	791	—	—	—	—

Note:
Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust was established 1 August 2002 from the acute services of Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust and Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust. For 2001 and 2002, data for both trusts was reported under Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust
Source:
DH form KH07 and Monthly Monitoring

Nursing Vacancies

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many three month vacancies there are for nursing posts in each *(a)* NHS trust and *(b)* primary care trust in the Thames Valley Strategic Health Authority area; and what the three month vacancy rate is in each case. [178181]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A breakdown of the number of three month vacancies for nursing posts and three month vacancy rates for each national health service trust and primary care trust in the Thames Valley Strategic Health Authority area has been placed in the Library.

Official Vehicles

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of official vehicles used by his Department are run on *(a)* petrol, *(b)* diesel, *(c)* liquid petroleum gas and *(d)* compressed natural gas. [172775]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The table shows a breakdown of the Department's vehicle fleet in 2003–04 by vehicle category and fuel type.

Cars	Number	Percentage
2003–04		
Petrol	42	49
Diesel	41	48
Liquid petroleum gas	3	3
Natural gas	0	0
Total	86	100

Organ Donation

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what studies indicate that successful lung transplants can be achieved from non-heart beating donors; and if he will make a statement. [178093]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Lungs have already been successfully transplanted from non-heart beating donors in Sweden, Spain, the United States of America and the United Kingdom. Research has shown that non-heart beating donors may prove to be a very good source of lungs for transplantation and should lead to further successful non-heart beating donor transplants in the future.

Patients Forums

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what consultations took place on the capping of Patient Forum membership at an average of 10 per forum; and if he will make a statement; [178876]

(2) what the reasons are for the capping of Patient Forum membership at an average of 10 per forum. [178884]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The initial phase of recruitment of forum members in the three months to 1 December 2003 provided each of the 571 forums with their statutory minimum of seven members. The Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health (CPPIH) calculated that membership could increase to an average of 10 per forum within its existing budget and continued to recruit volunteers with this target in mind.

Increasing forum membership was raised as a key issue at a series of 31 regional meetings in May 2004, attended by around 1,200 forum members. In particular, forums which covered a large geographical area, for example, ambulance and mental health trusts and specialist and national hospitals, felt they needed flexibility to recruit more than 10 members.

The CPPIH has responded by announcing that it will agree individual recruitment plans with forums for an appropriate and affordable level of membership, which could move towards 15 over time.

Positron Emission Tomography Scanners

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what estimate he has made of the number of positron emission tomography scanners per head of the population in *(a)* England and *(b)* other European Union countries; [174839]

(2) if he will publish a national service framework on the provision of positron emission tomography scanners. [174840]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 21 May 2004]*: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Prescription Drugs

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what research his Department has *(a)* conducted and *(b)* commissioned into prescription drug addiction; and if he will make a statement; [174456]

(2) how many people in the United Kingdom he estimates are addicted to prescription drugs. [174457]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Prescription medicines that are recognised to have the potential for dependence include benzodiazepines, synthetic opioids, amphetamines and barbiturates. At the time of licensing, the available data on the potential for abuse and dependence of drugs within these classes are carefully considered by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency and the Committee on Safety of Medicines. The product information for these medicines contains clear warnings about the potential for dependence and where appropriate restrictions on the licensed indications and the duration of treatment are specified in order to reduce this risk.

Information for prescribers on benzodiazepines and opiates has been disseminated via the "Current Problems in Pharmacovigilance" bulletin and/or the "CMO Update", and is also available in the British National Formulary distributed to doctors and pharmacists.

The use of benzodiazepines is the area where the greatest amount of research has been conducted. This includes a large project, costing more than £1 million, currently being conducted by the Medical Research Council into dependence in association with benzodiazepines.

Information is not available on the number of people addicted to prescription drugs in the United Kingdom.

Skin Care Campaigns

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been spent on campaigns on *(a)* skin cancer and *(b)* other skin damage, induced by sunlight in each of the last 10 years. [172333]

Miss Melanie Johnson: We have invested the following on sun awareness campaigns.

	£
1999–2000	543,000
2000–01	50,000
2001–02	126,000
2002–03	140,000

Annual figures on expenditure of sun awareness campaigns undertaken by the health education authority are not available between 1996–97 and 1998–99.

Funding of approximately £400,000 over the next three years has been approved for Cancer Research UK to run its "SunSmart" sun awareness campaign on behalf of the United Kingdom health departments, following the successful launch of "SunSmart" last year.

Waiting Lists/Times

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to conduct an audit of the two week wait rule of suspected cancer referrals. [174160]

Miss Melanie Johnson: A two week outpatient waiting time standard was introduced for all urgent referrals of suspected cancer during 2000. The Department has no plans to carry out an audit of the two week wait but all trusts have been encouraged to undertake local audit to assess the impact of the two week wait on local services and to enable the appropriateness of urgent and routine referrals against the guidelines to be fed back to referring general practitioners. The Department has commissioned the University of York, in 2003, to undertake a systematic review of two week wait audits carried out by professional bodies, trusts and cancer networks.

The latest results of the quarterly monitoring show that 98 per cent. of all urgent referrals for suspected cancer were seen within two weeks.

TREASURY

Fuel Price Rise

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the total revenue raised by means of VAT is for each penny per litre rise in the price of *(a)* petrol and *(b)* diesel; [178284]

(2) how much revenue he expects to raise by means of the proposed increase in fuel duty in September in the *(a) 2004*-05 and *(b)* 2005–06 financial year. [178290]

John Healey: Customs and Excise do not collect data on VAT raised from individual goods or services. Estimates of the impact on revenues of road fuel duty rates and VAT rate changes were published in the "Tax Ready Reckoner and Tax Reliefs" alongside the 2003 pre-Budget report, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House.

Revenue estimates for all taxes and duties can be found in Table A1 of this year's "Financial Statement and Budget Report" (HC 301).

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMISSION

National Audit Office

Mr. Leigh: To ask the Chairman of the Public Accounts Commission whether the Commission has reached a decision on the external audit arrangements for the National Audit Office. [179098]

Mr. Alan Williams: In exercise of its powers under section 4(5) of the National Audit Act 1983, the Commission has approved the renewal for a further two years of the appointment of Haines Watts as auditors of the National Audit Office. This arrangement covers the audits of the financial years 2004–05 and 2005–06.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Serbia and Montenegro

7. **Mr. Randall:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what aid his Department is giving to refugees and internally displaced persons in Serbia and Montenegro. [178967]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: My department is working with the authorities in Serbia and Montenegro to strengthen their capacity to deal effectively with the needs of refugees and Internally Displaced People. We are supporting the comprehensive Poverty Reduction Strategy, which explicitly addresses the needs of IDPs. In Kosovo we are working to create an environment that makes it easier for IDPs to return, strengthening essential public services and promoting growth and job creation.

Montserrat

8. **Mr. Pickthall:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of current development priorities for Montserrat. [178968]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: We are working with the island government, to help generate local revenue and entourage private sector investment. (A new airport, for example, will be completed later this year.) Ultimately we want to enable the island to be self-sufficient, an ambition of the island government too.

I hope to discuss progress when I visit the island next week.

Sudan

9. **Mr. Lyons:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how his Department is contributing to relief aid in Sudan. [178969]

Hilary Benn: The humanitarian situation in Darfur, Western Sudan, is of grave concern. The UK has been a lead donor in the response to this crisis. We have allocated £34.5 million in humanitarian aid, as well as a £2 million contribution to the African Union Monitoring Mission for the region (through the Africa Conflict Prevention Pool).

HIV/AIDS

10. **Mr. Gerrard:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when he expects to publish his Department's strategy for HIV/AIDS. [178970]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The strategy will be published shortly.

Development Aid

11. **Ms Drown:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent discussions he has had on increasing the UK's overseas development assistance to 0.7 per cent. of gross national income by 2008. [178971]

Hilary Benn: Funding of official development assistance up to 2007–08 will be decided as part of the current spending review, on which discussions between DFID and the Treasury are continuing.

West Africa

12. **Kali Mountford:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on progress towards the millennium development goals in west Africa. [178972]

Hilary Benn: DFID closely monitors progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in those countries—Sierra Leone, Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, The Gambia—where we have programmes of direct development assistance. These show that progress is disappointing on many of the MDGs. There are particular challenges on child and maternal mortality and HIV/AIDs. We are working with partner Governments and other donors on how to respond.

Information on the MDGs can be found on the UN website www.millenniumindicators.un.org.

British Virgin Islands

13. **Mr. Steen:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make an official visit to the British Virgin Islands to discuss the impact of EU directives. [178973]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: There are no plans for a DFID Ministerial visit to the British Virgin Islands. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Her Majesty's Treasury have regular contacts with territory representatives on issues of mutual interest, including the impact of EU directives.

South America

14. **Mr. Wilkinson:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what UK development aid has been allocated to *(a)* Ecuador, *(b)* Peru and *(c)* Bolivia for financial year 2004–05. [178974]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID has allocated £2.4million to Peru and £4.9million to Bolivia in 2004–05 as direct bilateral assistance. There is no allocation for Ecuador.

DFID also provides assistance through its support to UK non-governmental organisations working in the region through the Civil Society Challenge Fund and Partnership Programme Agreements. In addition, DFID also spends about £170 million a year in these countries through its indirect share of multilateral concessional expenditure.

South Asia

15. **Julie Morgan:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what progress has been made towards achieving universal primary education in south Asia. [178975]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Some progress towards universal primary education is being made in south Asia but this needs to be accelerated. In Bangladesh and India gross primary enrolment rates are above 100 per cent. but this is partly due to children repeating grades and the enrolment of under and over-age children. Erratic data for Pakistan make it difficult to judge overall progress. More information is available in DFIDs Departmental report for 2004.

Departmental Websites

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the total cost of his Department's websites, including those of its agencies, was in the most recent year for which figures are available. [178793]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The cost of the DFID website (www.dfid.gov.uk) for the period March 2003 to February 2004 was £36,709. Staffing costs for the team of four who manage it were £111,249.

Ministerial Visits

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many journeys were made by helicopter by each Minister in his Department and its predecessors in each of the last 10 years; and what the journey length was in each case. [175727]

Hilary Benn: In respect of overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The Government have also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Libraries of the House. These contain information reaching back to 1995–06. Information for earlier years and for the means of travel could be obtained only at disproportionate cost and in some cases will no longer be held. Information for 2003–04 will be published in due course

All ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the travel costs incurred *(a)* by his Department and *(b)* by each Minister within his Department, for each of the last 10 years. [175647]

Hilary Benn: Figures for travel costs within administration costs budgets for years for which information is readily available are as follows. Travel costs for 2003–04 are currently being collated. All official travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules contained in DFID's staff handbook.

£

	Amount
2001–02	2,358,000
2002–03	2,645,000

In respect of overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government has published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The Government has also published on an annual basis the costs of Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are

available in the Libraries of the House. These report information reaching back to 1995–96. Information for earlier years could be obtained only at disproportionate costs and in some cases will no longer be held. Information for 2003–04 will be published in due course. For UK travel by Ministers, information is not available centrally for the last 10 years and to collate this information would incur disproportionate cost.

All Ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

UNESCO

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much was spent on maintaining a British ambassador to UNESCO in each year since 1997. [178124]

Hilary Benn: The figures in pound sterling are as follows:

£

	Amount
1997	30,063
1998	190,773
1999	118,175
2000	120,626
2001	124,695
2002	128,853
2003	115,732
2004	58,575

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what formal consultations the British ambassador to UNESCO has held with leading British museums, libraries and galleries in relation to the formation of international cultural policy in the last 12 months. [178125]

Hilary Benn: The current British Ambassador to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has been in post for six months. During that time his main efforts have concentrated on re-establishing the UK National Commission for UNESCO which will have a role in advising Government on international cultural policy. The Commission will have representations from links with a wide cross-section of civil society, including museums, libraries and galleries. A temporary national committee has now been set up. The Ambassador has had discussions with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) on international cultural policy, and informal discussions with a number of representatives of museums including on specific issues such as help for developing countries' heritage work.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what instructions he has issued to the British Ambassador to UNESCO in relation to the position of the United States Administration on the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. [178127]

Hilary Benn: None. It is a matter for individual sovereign states to decide whether they will become a party to an international agreement. The Minister for Heritage, Lord McIntosh, announced on 14 May the UK's intention to ratify the Hague Convention.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many employees in his Department have *(a)* signed a formal opt out from and *(b)* are exempt from the Working Time Directive; and how many employees in his Department have recorded hours, including any accruing on a flexitime basis, in excess of the maximum allowed under the Working Time Directive in the last month for which figures are available. [178375]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: *(a)* None, *(b)* None. It is DFID's policy to discourage the regular working of long hours. There will always be occasions when, for example, emergency situations or parliamentary demands will mean that long hours may be required as a short-term response, but DFID guidance to managers emphasises that regular long hour working must never be ignored or overlooked and that DFID has a duty to ensure the health and safety of our staff.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Council Tax Benefit (Stroud)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will set out the level of council tax benefit for the Stroud district council area for each of the last three years. [178463]

Mr. Pond: Council tax benefit is an income related benefit and is paid according to the financial circumstances of the person claiming it. Therefore, there is not a single set level of council tax benefit. The average weekly amount of council tax benefit in the Stroud local authority area is in the table.

Average weekly council tax benefit in Stroud local authority area

As at August	£
2001	10.37
2002	11.39
2003	13.14

Notes:
1. The data refers to benefit units, which may be a single person or a couple.
2. The average amounts have been rounded to the nearest penny.
3. Council tax benefit totals exclude any Second Adult Rebate cases.

Source:
Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Management Information System Quarterly 100 per cent. caseload stock-count taken in August 2001, 2002 and 2003.

Attendance Allowance

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many attendance allowance claims in Scotland *(a)* were subject to appeal between February 2002 and February 2003, broken down by (i) disability benefit

centre and (ii) quarter and *(b)* have been subject to appeal since February 2003, broken down by month. [176762]

Mr. Pond: The information requested is set out in the tables.

Attendance allowance appeals for Scotland received at the Appeals Service (tAS) by office, for February 2002–03

Originating office	*Number of received appeals at tAS*
Edinburgh DBC	390
Glasgow DBC	890
Disability Benefits Unit	85
Total	1,365

Attendance allowance appeals for Scotland received at tAS by office and quarter, for February 2002–03

	Quarter 1(March–ay 2002)			*Quarter 2(June–ugust 2002)*		
Originating office	*Appeals*	*AA claims (Thousand)*	*Appeals/claims (Percentage)*	*Appeals*	*AA claims (Thousand)*	*Appeals/claims (Percentage)*
Edinburgh DBC	120	56.8	0.2	110	57.4	0.2
Glasgow DBC	230	48.0	0.5	190	48.6	0.4
Disability Benefits Unit	30	—	—	35	—	—
Total	380	104.8	—	335	106.0	—

	Quarter 3(September–November 2002)			*Quarter 4(December 2002–ebruary 2003)*		
Originating office	*Appeals*	*AA claims (Thousand)*	*Appeals/claims (Percentage)*	*Appeals*	*AA claims (Thousand)*	*Appeals/claims (Percentage)*
Edinburgh DBC	80	58.8	0.1	35	58.8	0.1
Glasgow DBC	180	50.4	0.4	190	50.9	0.4
Disability Benefits Unit	10	—	—	15	—	—
Total	270	109.2	—	240	109.7	—

Note:
In the above period the Disability Benefits Unit processed the specified number of appeals on behalf of claims originating in Scotland.

Attendance allowance appeals for Scotland received at tAS by month, from February 2003 to April 2004

Month	*Number*
February 2003	70
March 2003	75
April 2003	60
May 2003	55
June 2003	140
July 2003	95
August 2003	90
September 2003	100
October 2003	115
November 2003	120
December 2003	90
January 2004	115
February 2004	100
March 2004	105
April 2004	60
Total	1,390

Source:
IAD information centre. 100 per cent. download of the Generic Appeals Processing System.

Carers

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost would be of increasing carers' allowance to the level of the full basic state pension; and what assessment he has made of the consequent effect upon payments of means-tested benefits. [178597]

Maria Eagle: The gross cost of increasing carer's allowance from its current rate of £44.35 per week to the level of the full basic state pension (£79.60 per week) would be around £770 million in 2004–05. After allowing for offsets in means-tested benefits the cost would be around £370 million. Some of those who would benefit would see their increased CA payment fully eroded by reduced income support.

Notes:

1. Estimates use benefit rates for 2004–05 and are based on a 100 per cent. extract of CA claims on the CA computer system for May 2003, a 5 per cent. extract from the claims on the IS computer system in 2003 and a 1 per cent. extract of the housing benefit/council tax benefit claims of May 2001.

2. The estimates do not take account of any potential behavioural changes that may result from increasing the rate of CA.

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of working age carers in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* Scotland are credited with Class 1 national insurance contributions in respect of their caring commitments. [178600]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the form requested. In 2003–04, a total of 520,000 working age carers in the UK who were entitled to carer's allowance, were also given NI credits for periods ranging from one week to a full year.

Separate figures are not available for Scotland.

Other carers entitled to CA may receive credits because they are in receipt of benefits such as incapacity benefit or jobseeker's allowance. Women who have elected to pay married women's reduced rate contributions would not receive credits.

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the merits of payments for all carers. [178601]

Mr. Pond: The needs of carers are diverse and the support they need is not always financial. As well as having access to the full range of social security benefits and tax credits, depending on their individual circumstances, carers also have access to a wide range of support services available through local authorities and health authorities, which take account of local factors.

Carer's allowance provides a measure of income maintenance to those carers who are spending substantial amounts of time caring for a severely disabled person, and are over pension age or unable to undertake full-time work. The Government are satisfied that targeting help in this way represents the best use of resources.

Disability Living Allowance

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the annual additional expenditure if the qualifying period for attendance allowance was reduced from six months to three months; how many successful claimants would be affected per year; what the annual cost would be of extending entitlement to the *(a)* mobility component and *(b)* the lowest rate care component of disability living allowance to people who claim after the age of 65; how many people would gain a mobility component; how many people would gain the lowest rate care component; and if he will make a statement. [178461]

Mr. Pond: The requested information is not available. Entitlement to Attendance Allowance or to a component of disability living allowance can only be established when a claim is made and the actual needs of the individual are assessed. There are no reliable data available on which estimates could be made of the effects of changing the qualifying period for Attendance allowance or of the number of people aged 65 and over who might be entitled to either the mobility component or the lowest rate care component of disability living allowance if they were to make a claim.

Smoking-Related Conditions

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people claimed invalidity benefit as a result of a smoking-related condition in each year since 1997. [178931]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available. Incapacity benefit is awarded on the basis of the functional effects of disabling conditions, regardless of their cause or of any contributory factors such as smoking. Information about incapacity benefit claimants' smoking habits is not routinely recorded.

Specialised Disability Fund

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many grants and how much grant was given to people aged *(a)* under 65 years and *(b)* 65 years and over from the Specialised Disability Fund in the last 12 months; and what plans he has to enable people disabled after the age of 65 years to receive money under the fund. [178460]

Mr. Pond: There is no Specialised Disability Fund. However, the Department for Work and Pensions sponsors the Specialised Vehicles Funds and the Independent Living Funds.

The charity Motability administers the Specialised Vehicles Funds on behalf of the Department. The funds provide grants towards the cost of specially adapted vehicles for disabled people who are eligible to apply to the Motability Scheme. The information requested is in Table 1.

The two Independent Living Funds make cash payments directly to severely disabled people for the purchase of personal assistance or help with domestic duties to enable them to continue to live in the community. The Extension Fund is a closed fund. However, the 1993 Fund, which applies to all new claims made since April 1993, makes payments to people aged 65 or under at the date of claim. The information requested is in Table 2.

There are no plans to extend any of the funds beyond their current provision.

Table 1: Specialised Vehicles Funds—1 June 2003 to 31 May 2004

	Number of grants	*Total amount of grants[1] (£ million)*
Aged under 65 years	1,075	7.6
Aged 65 years and over	75	0.4

[1] Rounded to the nearest £100,000.

Table 2: Independent Living Funds—1 June 2003 to 31 May 2004

	Number of clients receiving grants	*Total amount of grants[1] (£ million)*
Aged under 65 years	14,883	173
Aged 65 years and over[2]	1,585	16

[1] Rounded to the nearest £ million.

[2] Over age 65 calculated as at date of payment.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Departmental Secondments

Bob Spink: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many staff in the Department and its agencies were seconded from the *(a)* private and *(b)* academic sector in each of the last three years. [175362]

Mr. Lammy: No staff were seconded to this Department from either the private or academic sector in the 2000–01 or 2002–03 financial years. Five staff were seconded from the private sector during the period April 2001 to March 2002.

Figures for 2003–04 are not yet available.

Domestic Violence Courts

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of specialist domestic violence courts. [178992]

Mr. Leslie: My Department and the Crown Prosecution Service commissioned an evaluation of five specialist magistrates courts operating in Cardiff, Derby, Leeds, West London and Wolverhampton. The results of the evaluation were presented at a national conference in London, on 22 March 2004.

The findings of the research indicated that a specialist listing or fast-track system for domestic violence cases, which included effective support for victims, had notable and positive benefits. The Government are considering how to encourage more magistrates' courts to develop specialist domestic violence sittings. This could provide not only an improved service to court users, especially victims, but could also improve outcomes for criminal justice targets by narrowing the justice gap and improving victims' confidence in the criminal justice courts system.

A copy of the research report will be placed in the Library of both Houses.

My Department has also set up a National Implementation Project Board to take forward the idea of developing Integrated Domestic Violence Courts which would hear both civil and criminal aspects of domestic violence cases.

Electoral Malpractice

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment he has made of the possibility of people who are registered in two electoral districts because they own two homes being able to exercise two votes in the European parliamentary elections and remain undetected. [179042]

Mr. Leslie: Although it is possible for certain persons to appear on two electoral registers and consequently to receive ballot papers for two different locations, it is an offence for a person to vote twice in European Parliamentary elections anywhere in Europe. Any offence, if successfully prosecuted, could result in a fine of up to £5,000. Member states exchange information about electors registered in more than one state, with the aim of preventing double voting. There has been no detailed assessment of the extent of this area of fraud but in response to the Electoral Commission's review of registration, the majority of Electoral Registration Officers reported no experience of such fraud.

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many individuals are registered to vote in more than one electoral district. [179043]

Mr. Leslie: This information is not collected.

Justices of the Peace (London)

Tom Cox: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many appointments of Justices of the Peace for the Greater London area have been *(a)* men and *(b)* women in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [178687]

Mr. Leslie: The information is as follows:

In 2000–01 there were 87 men and 107 women appointed.

In 2001–02 there were 80 men and 81 women appointed.

In 2002–03 there were 68 men and 73 women appointed.

The figures for 2003–04 are not yet available.

Magistrates (Retirement)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what his policy is on the compulsory retirement of magistrates; and what plans he has to raise the retirement age. [178506]

Mr. Leslie: The retirement age of 70 for magistrates is statutory, as specified in the Justices of the Peace Act 1997. A general retirement age of 70 for judicial office holders was decided upon in the early 1990's when, after wide consultation, the then Government concluded that a retirement age of 70 was appropriate to modern conditions and this was reflected in new legislation.

There are currently no plans to increase the retirement age of judicial office holders, but we are looking at the position in the context of that part of the European Employment Directive on equal treatment in employment and occupation on age discrimination, which comes into force in October 2006.

Ministerial Visits

David Davis: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) if he will list the travel costs incurred by *(a)* the Department and its predecessors and *(b)* each Minister within his Department, for each of the last 10 years; [175655]

(2) how much the Department and its predecessor spent on ministerial travel by *(a)* car, *(b)* train, *(c)* aeroplane and *(d)* helicopter, in each of the last 10 years;. [175666]

(3) how many journeys were made by helicopter by each Minister in his Department and its predecessors in each of the last 10 years; and what the journey length was in each case. [175735]

Mr. Lammy: The information is as follows:

(1) *(a)* Total travel costs for my Department, which covers costs for the Court Service, the Public Guardianship Office and DCA Headquarters was as per the table as follows:

Period	*Amount (£)*
2004–05 (To 31 May)	726,579
2003–04	5,913,187
2002–03	5,035,694
2001–02	4,522,177
2000–01	4,169,902
1999–2000	4,237,897
1998–99	3,506,760

(1) *(b)* it is not possible to list the travel costs of each Minister within my Department without incurring disproportionate cost. However, aggregate travel and subsistency costs for the Private Offices, which covers costs for Ministers and Officials was as per the table:

Period	*Amount (£)*
2004–05 (To 31 May)	11,280
2003–04	64,891
2002–03	83,051
2001–02	60,220
2000–01	98,592
1999–2000	59,823
1998–99	40,192

Information on previous years is not readily available.

(2) *(a)* My hon. Friend the Minister of the Cabinet office has asked Nick Matheson, Chief Executive of the Government Car and Despatch Agency to write to the hon. Member with details of the cost of ministerial vehicles provided to this Department.

(2) *(b)* *(c)* and *(d)* it is not possible for my Department to provide the full detailed information requested without incurring disproportionate cost.

(3) My Department's records cannot provide a definite, exact answer, without incurring disproportionate cost.

In respect of overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The Government have also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Libraries of the House. These report information reaching back to 1995–06. Information for earlier years could be obtained only at disproportionate cost and in some cases will no longer be held. Information for 2003–04 will be published in due course.

My Department has published rules for official travel in its staff handbook and Ministerial travel is governed by the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many employees in the Department have *(a)* signed a formal opt out from and *(b)* are exempt from the Working Time Directive; and how many employees in his Department have recorded hours, including any accruing on a flexitime basis, in excess of the maximum allowed under the Working Time Directive in the last month for which figures are available. [178361]

Mr. Lammy: Managers in my Department are required to obtain a written agreement if an employee chooses to work more than the 48 hour average weekly limit. This information is held locally and is not readily available. I will write to the hon. member as soon as the information is available. There are currently no staff employed who are exempt from the Working Time Directive. Working hours, including those accruing on a flexitime basis, are monitored by line managers locally and no central figures are available. Managers are instructed to monitor hours closely if staff work close to or over 48 hours per week to ensure compliance with the Regulations. The Department is fully committed to reducing the number of employees required to work in excess of 48 hours per week commensurate with operational needs. It does so by adjusting working hours and redesigning jobs in order to keep such posts to an absolute minimum and the policy is kept under regular review.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 17 June 2004

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Council Housing

Ms Buck: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list *(a)* the number of council housing stock option appraisals signed off by the Government to date and *(b)* the number of these which have involved (i) retention of the stock, (ii) transfer of the stock to a registered social landlord, (iii) delegation to an arm's length management organisation and (iv) mixed solutions, *(c)* the number of local authorities that have submitted an options appraisal which has not yet been signed off and *(d)* the number of authorities that have not yet submitted an appraisal to be signed off in (A) London and (B) England. [178472]

Keith Hill: Local authorities were only required to have signed off option appraisals from April 2003. Prior to that date 157 local authorities had already opted for transfer or Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) of which 11 are in London.

The table as follows shows the position regarding the sign-off requirement as of 9 June 2004, as reported by Government Offices for the Regions

	England (including London)	*London*
(a) Total number. of OAs signed off	27	2
(b)(i) Number of these that have involved retention	13	Nil
(b)(ii) Number of these that have involved transfer	13	Nil
(b)(iii) Number of these that have involved ALMO	10	2
(b)(iv) Number of these that have involved mixed solutions	2	Nil
(c) Number of LAs that have submitted an options appraisal without sign off as of 9 June 04	6	1
(d) Number of LAs that have not yet submitted an options appraisal as of 9 June 2004	164	19

Coverage Care

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answers of 15 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 59–60W and 29 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1227W, on Coverage Care (Gloucestershire Ltd.), what estimate he has made of the maximum contingent liability to be borne by *(a)* council tax payers in Gloucestershire and *(b)* the general tax payer; if he will list the information which the county council has resolved should remain confidential; under what circumstances a specific consent would need to be sought by the county council; and what discussions he has held on the county council's invocation of confidentiality provisions in local government legislation in relation to this matter. [173029]

Yvette Cooper: The bulk of Government support is paid as block grant, so local authorities have considerable freedom to determine their spending priorities and decide how to apportion their revenue budget between services. The provision of local authority services is for individual authorities, bearing in mind their statutory responsibilities. The Government does not have a power to intervene in local authorities' day to day decisions.

It is for local authorities to determine the level of council tax. Local authorities should be consulting their local tax payers on issues about levels of council tax and what the money is spent on.

Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 describes the types of "exempt information" which a local authority can decide to keep confidential. Gloucestershire county council has resolved to keep confidential the types of information specified in paragraphs 5, 7 and 9. These paragraphs cover information relating to financial assistance provided by the authority, the financial or business affairs of other parties and terms proposed in the course of commercial contract negotiations. No discussions have been held between the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the county council about the council's use of confidentiality provisions in local government legislation. The circumstances under which a specific consent would need to be sought by the county council are set out in sections 24 and 25 of the Local Government Act 1988.

Economic Regeneration Funding

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what financial support was given by his Department to each of the areas designated as a priority area for economic regeneration as defined by Regional Planning Guidance 9 in 2003–04. [179230]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister funds a large number of programmes either through its agencies, such as English Partnerships, or directly. In 2003–4 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's direct initiatives which assisted economic regeneration in the South-East included the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, Wardens Schemes, Neighbourhood Management Pilots, New Deal for Communities, the Community Empowerment Fund, Community Chest, Community Learning Chest, Single Regeneration Budget and European Structural Fund Objective Two. The information on how much was given in 2003–4 in each of the priority areas for economic regeneration is not held centrally, and could only be provided at a disproportionate cost.

Fire Service (Recruitment)

Mr. Randall: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many recruits there were to each fire authority in England and Wales in each of the last five years, broken down by *(a)* gender and *(b)* ethnicity. [178770]

Mr. Raynsford: Information in the form requested is not readily available for the years 1999–2001. Information on the number of successful applicants for

each fire authority in England and Wales from 1999 to 2001 by gender and ethnicity is not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Information on the number of successful applicants for each authority in England and Wales in each of the last two years by *(a)* gender and *(b)* ethnicity is available in the Library of the House.

Housing Stock Transfer

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what receipts there were from stock transfer of council housing, broken down by local authority and giving the number of homes involved, the unit transfer price, and the total capacity receipt in each case, in each year since 1997. [178905]

Keith Hill: To reflect the intended continued use of the properties for social housing and the need for capital investment, the price paid to each local authority per council dwelling and reflected in the following table, accords with a Tenanted Market Value (TMV) rather than an open market value. Where there is a negative value a grant equal to this amount was paid by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister as part of the Estates Renewal Challenge Fund (ERCF) programme. The table shows the receipts from stock transfer, broken down by local authority, showing the number of dwellings, price per dwelling and the gross transfer price in each year since 1997.

Local authority	*Date of transfer*	*Number of dwellings*	*Price per dwelling (£)*	*Gross transfer price (£ million)*	*ERCF grant paid for negative valuation X*
Cotswold DC	28 February 1997	4,282	12,818	53.45	—
South Staffs C	7 March 1997	5,273	7,998	42.67	—
Lichfield DC	19 March 1997	4,921	8,416	40.88	—
South Oxfordshire DC	7 July 1997	5,018	13,618	68.33	—
Eden C	22 September 1997	1,510	11,253	16.99	—
LB Lambeth * Moorlands	5 January 1998	515	-24,660	-12.80	X
LB Bexley	9 February 1998	4,118	11,996	49.40	—
LB Bexley	9 February 1998	4,097	8,540	34.99	—
Congleton BC	2 March 1998	4,061	7,939	32.24	—
Oldham BC* Limehurst	9 March 1998	642	-8,941	-5.74	X
Liverpool CC * Windermere	19 March 1998	493	-13,164	-6.49	X
LB Merton* Pollards Hill	23 March 1998	1,018	-13,635	-13.88	X
LB Tower Hamlets* Poplar 1	23 March 1998	1,852	-19,006	-35.20	X
Kerrier DC	23 March 1998	3,732	8,579	32.02	—
LB Hackney * Kingsmead	30 March 1998	951	-11,199	-10.65	X
LB Brent * Fortunegate/Church End	30 March 1998	1,481	-16,874	-25.00	X
Basildon DC* Vange	30 March 1998	708	-9,562	-6.77	X
West Somerset DC	30 March 1998	1,869	13,750	25.70	—
Stoke-on-Trent CC * Bentilee	31 March 1998	917	-11,221	-10.29	X
Tewkesbury BC	27 April 1998	3,066	7,985	24.48	—
Rother DC	1 May 1998	3,058	10,072	30.80	—
LB Lambeth * Lansdowne Green	20 July 1998	681	-12,555	-8.54	X
LB Tower Hamlets* Poplar II	7 December 1998	2,431	-7,805	-18.97	X
Wirral* Leasowe	25 January 1999	1,082	-4,799	-5.19	X
Tameside * West Ashton	1 February 1999	901	-10,655	-9.57	X
West Devon BC	22 February 1999	1,446	9,200	13.52	—
South Somerset DC	1 March 1999	8,883	7,795	69.25	—
East Lindsey DC	1 March 1999	5,102	8,820	45.00	—
Liverpool CC * Pinehurst	5 March 1999	646	-9,505	-6.14	X
Manchester CC Darnhill	8 March 1999	1,030	82	0.85	—
LB Hackney * Morningside	15 March 1999	1,084	-9,339	-10.12	X
South Hams District Council	22 March 1999	3,096	13,243	41.00	—
LB Hammersmith and Fulham * Old Oak	17 March 1999	668	-14,027	-9.37	X
LB Hackney * Upper Clapton	22 March 1999	1,000	-19,975	-19.98	X
Telford and Wrekin C	25 March 1999	13,081	9	113.37	—
LB Enfield	29 March 1999	1,194	n/a	0.00	—
Worthing BC	29 March 1999	2,525	14,095	35.59	—
Bath and North East Somerset C	29 March 1999	9,887	8,040	79.49	—
Manchester CC* East Wythenshawe	29 March 1999	6,667	-3,165	-20.81	X
LB Greenwich * Charlton Triangle	29 March 1999	1,280	-14,077	-18.02	X
LB Hackney * Haggerston	29 March 1999	661	-20,030	-13.24	X
Allerdale BC	31 March 1999	3,704	8,261	30.60	—
Allerdale BC * Salterbeck	31 March 1999	727	-5,451	-3.96	X
Preston BC * Avenham	14 June 1999	1,121	-8,576	-9.61	X
LB Lambeth* Central Stockwell	5 July 1999	2,358	-6,667	-17.53	X
Birmingham CC* Central Areas	21 June 1999	2,813	-17,401	-50.55	X
LB Islington* Barnsbury	26 September 1999	647	-6,646	-4.29	X
LB Islington* Ten Estates	26 September 1999	739	-24,898	-18.41	X
Liverpool CC* Speke Garston	4 October 1999	4,382	-9,990	-43.78	X
West Lindsey DC	18 October 1999	3,929	7,814	30.70	—
LB Lambeth* St. Martins	25 October 1999	1,033	-6,805	-7.03	X
Boston BC	29 November 1999	4,871	8,907	43.40	—
Tynedale DC	20 December 1999	3,564	9,5	33.86	—
Newcastle under Lyme BC	31 January 2000	9,887	5,462	54.00	—
Restormel BC	7 February 2000	3,577	7,018	25.11	—

Local authority	Date of transfer	Number of dwellings	Price per dwelling (£)	Gross transfer price (£ million)	ERCF grant paid for negative valuation X
Manchester CC (Colshaw Farm)	14 February 2000	600	1,500	0.90	—
North Devon DC	21 February 2000	3,293	13,438	44.25	—
LB Hackney* Stamford Hill	6 March 2000	1,095	-12,082	-13.23	X
LB Hackney* Pembury Estate	6 March 2000	1,241	-12,379	-15.35	X
Burnley BC	8 March 2000	5,330	4,205	22.41	—
Manchester CC Sale Estate	20 March 2000	1,655	1,419	2.35	—
Weymouth and Portland C	20 March 2000	3,105	9,983	30.99	—
Huntingdon DC	20 March 2000	6,650	9,534	63.40	—
Elmbridge BC	27 March 2000	4,894	11,626	56.90	—
Test Valley BC	27 March 2000	5,495	14,559	79.99	—
Wyre Forest DC	27 March 2000	6,056	6,762	40.95	—
Manchester CC Whitefield Estate	27 March 2000	1,033	1,942	1.97	—
LB Tower Hamlets* THCH	27 March 2000	1,551	-13,718	-21.43	X
Tameside	27 March 2000	8,532	6,489	127.50	—
MBC	〃	7,934	7,057		—
LB Richmond	17 July 2000	7,139	8,335	59.50	—
Coventry CC	22 September 2000	20,125	2,460	49.50	—
Fylde BC	2 October 2000	1,905	6,300	12.00	—
Chester CC	27 November 2000	7,096	6,341	45.00	—
Horsham DC	11 December 2000	4,650	14,462	67.25	—
LB Tower Hamlets* Poplar 1	12 February 2001	1,859	-1,894	-35.22	X
East Northamptonshire DC	19 February 2001	3,495	6,150	21.49	—
Torbay BC	19 February 2001	2,947	6,480	19.10	—
Staffordshire Moorlands DC	23 February 2001	3,132	6,290	19.67	—
Calderdale MBC	6 March 2001	12,759	2,825	36.00	—
Chichester DC	13 March 2001	5,321	14,752	78.50	—
Mendip DC	19 March 2001	4,326	8,091	35.00	—
West Wiltshire DC	26 March 2001	3,284	6,423	21.00	—
West Oxfordshire DC	26 March 2001	3,643	13,972	50.90	—
East Staffordshire BC	26 March 2001	5,637	3,643	24.50	—
Manchester CC Handforth Estate	26 March 2001	659	535	0.37	—
Sunderland CC	26 March 2001	36,356	6,045	219.80	—
Blackburn with Darwen BC	28 March 2001	9,886	4,195	35.40	—
Shrewsbury and Atcham BC	1 October 2001	5,500	11,527	63.40	—
Mid-Bedfordshire DC	5 November 2001	3,084	10,159	31.33	—
Derbyshire Dales	4 March 2002	3,287	7,616	24.80	—
Chelmsford BC	11 March 2002	6,902	11,530	79.60	—
East Hertfordshire	18 March 2002	2,687	11,937	32.10	—
East Hertfordshire	〃	3,237	13,725	44.40	—
Erewash BC	25 March 2002	5,847	6,460	38.10	—
Reigate and Banstead BC	25 March 2002	4,846	13,212	64.00	—
St. Edmundsbury	24 June 2002	5,947	7,489	45.10	—
Vale Royal BC	1 July 2002	6,813	7,462	51.07	—
St. Helens MBC	1 July 2002	14,632	1,974	28.90	—
Redcar and Cleveland BC	15 July 2002	11,625	5,180	60.20	—
Knowsley MBC	15 July 2002	17,090	1,794	30.66	—
LB Waltham Forest	30 September 2002	2,242	832	1.87	—
LB Hackney cc sheltered stock	14 October 2002	954	0	0.00	—
LB Harrow	14 October 2002	518	0	0.00	—
Manchester cc Langley Estate	18 November 2002	3,360	0	0.00	—
County of Herefordshire C	25 November 2002	5,696	6,945	39.56	—
Carlisle CC	9 December 2002	7,198	1,803	12.98	—
Rushcliffe BC	20 January 2003	3,445	12,934	44.56	—
Liverpool CC Eastern Fringe (south)	23 January 2003	2,833	1,800	5.10	—
Liverpool CC Eastern Fringe (central)	30 January 2003	3,702	0	0.00	—
City of Bradford	24 February 2003	24,764	2,831	70.10	—
Amber Valley BC	24 February 2003	5,632	5,077	28.57	—
Crewe and Nantwich BC	10 March 2003	5,515	6,181	34.10	—
Liverpool CC Eastern fringe north	10 March 2003	6,183	0	0.00	—
Oldham MBC Limeside (Hollins/The Avenues)	17 March 2003	634	0	0.00	—
Walsall MBC (majority of stock)	27 March 2003	22,971	1,026	24.00	—
Walsall MBC (tenant managed stock)	27 March 2003	1,828	0	0.00	—
Craven DC	31 March 2003	1,541	5,201	17.60	—
Forest of Dean DC	31 March 2003	3,577	6,849	24.50	—
North Hertfordshire DC	31 March 2003	8,570	3,128	27.00	—
Manchester CC (East Manchester)	8 September 2003	2,823	0	0.00	—
Scarborough BC	15 December 2003	4,632	5,232	24.25	—
Maidstone BC	2 February 2004	6,810	5,685	35.82	—
Teignbridge	4 February 2004	3,647	3,651	12.90	—
Oldham MBC Fitton Hill	15 March 2004	1,285	0	0.00	—
Cherwell	29 March 2004	3,656	7,397	42.85	—
Bromsgrove	29 March 2004	3,096	5,218	16.50	—
Hartlepool	29 March 2004	7,509	427	3.20	—
Liverpool (Kensington)	29 March 2004	289	0	0.00	—
Worcester	31 March 2004	4,714	1,128	5.31	—

Local authority	Date of transfer	Number of dwellings	Price per dwelling (£)	Gross transfer price (£ million)	ERCF grant paid for negative valuation X
South Norfolk	17 May 2004	4,214	7,499	31.60	—
Copeland BC	7 June 2004	3,787	317	1.20	—

[1] Two transfers to separate RSLs.

Lone Parents (Accommodation)

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many lone parents aged 16 and 17 years are resident in local authority accommodation with *(a)* on-site support, *(b)* floating support and *(c)* no specialist support. [177542]

Keith Hill: Information obtained from the 2002–03 Housing Investment Programme (HIP) statistical returns shows that on 1 April 2003 the following number of lone teenage parents under 18 were occupying local authority non self-contained accommodation: 201 in accommodation with on site support; 393 in accommodation with floating support. There were 2,869 lone teenage parents in supported accommodation provided by a housing association. The HIP returns for 2002–03 show that 1,242 lettings were made to lone teenage parents under the age of 18 in unsupported accommodation.

Ordnance Survey

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will examine whether there is a conflict of interest in the Government's adviser on geographic information being Chief Executive of the Ordnance Survey. [178478]

Yvette Cooper: Ordnance Survey is a Government Department. As the National Mapping Agency it has an aim, agreed with Government, to satisfy the national interest and customer need for accurate and readily available geospatial data and maps of the whole of Great Britain in the most effective and efficient way.

It is entirely appropriate that the Director General and Chief Executive of Ordnance Survey should be adviser to Government on matters of geographic information.

Proposals for a wider advisory panel as recommended by the Select Committee are currently under consideration.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 28 April, *Official Report*, column 1141W, on the Advisory Group on Home Buying, how much the minimal cost was which he refers to for financial years *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04. [179025]

Keith Hill: Meetings of the Home Buying and Selling Advisory Group are hosted by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister which take place in one of our buildings and the costs fall within our general administration and staff budget. The Group met once in each of the years 2002–03 and 2003–04. We estimate that the staff costs were approximately £1,000 per meeting. The catering costs were £41.40 per meeting.

Following a reorganisation of the structure for stakeholder involvement in the home buying and selling reform programme, the Advisory Group has now been replaced by two new groups: the Home Buying and Selling Forum which represents all stakeholder interests and; and the Central Stakeholder Group which comprises representatives of the main industry and consumer groups most affected by the reform proposals.

Planning Decisions

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage of planning decisions were delayed by more than eight weeks in *(a)* 2001, *(b)* 2002 and *(c)* 2003. [178530]

Keith Hill: For district planning authorities in England, the average percentages of planning decisions determined outside of eight weeks from the date of receipt of application in 2001, 2002 and 2003 were:

2001: 36 per cent.

2002: 34 per cent.

2003: 29 per cent.

Telecommunications Masts

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister for what reasons the recommendations of the Stewart Report on the Precautionary Approach on the placement of masts near schools have not been carried forward, with particular reference to recommendation 1.42; and if he will make a statement. [172312]

Yvette Cooper: The Government gave careful consideration to recommendation 1.42 on the beam of greatest intensity. We have sought to address the concerns that the Stewart Group identified in the following ways.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 8 on Telecommunications recognises that when operators are siting mobile phone base stations schools must be given special consideration. It makes clear that, where it is proposed to install, alter or replace a mobile base station near a school or college, operators should discuss the proposed development with the relevant body of the school or college concerned before submitting an application for planning permission or prior approval to the local authority.

Department for Education and Skills has issued advice to local education authorities and schools about base stations in and around school premises and the use of mobile phones by children. Where parents and/or schools wish to know whether the beam of intensity falls on school grounds or buildings, the school should contact the base station's operator. The operators have agreed to provide schools with information on the level of intensity of radio frequency radiation. If there is major concern from the school or parents, they could ask the network operator to adjust the antenna.

Another recommendation (1.41) of the Stewart Report was the auditing of emissions from base stations particularly near schools and other sensitive sites. In an ongoing audit, OFCOM (formerly the Radiocommunications Agency) has measured exposures around nearly 300 base stations to date (www.ofcom.org.uk). In all cases exposures have been below, and mostly thousands of times below, the guidelines.

TREASURY

Overseas Aid

16. **Ann McKechin:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make a statement on the comprehensive spending review with regard to a timetable to reach the 0.7 per cent. of gross national income target for development aid by 2008. [179138]

John Healey: We remain committed to reaching the 0.7 per cent. target as demonstrated by our record on aid spending since 1997. This includes the largest ever increase of UK development assistance to nearly £5 billion by 2005–06.

We will announce in the 2004 Spending Review what we will do up to 2007–08, but at this stage I cannot pre-empt the final announcement.

18. **Mr. Lazarowicz:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make a statement on the comprehensive spending review with regard to the timetable to reach the overseas development assistance target of 0.7 per cent. of gross national income by 2008. [179140]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow, Maryhill, (Ann McKenchin) earlier today.

International Finance Facility

17. **Mr. Russell Brown:** To ask the Chancellor of Exchequer, what progress has been made on the international finance facility. [179139]

John Healey: I refer the right hon. Member to the answer my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave to the hon. Member for Bristol West, (Valerie Davey) earlier today.

Poor Countries (Debt Relief)

19. **Mr. Reed:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what progress he has made in persuading the G8 to support his plans for further debt relief for the poorest countries. [179141]

John Healey: Further cancellation of debt for the world's poorest countries was an important item of discussion at the recent G8 Summit in Sea Island.

The UK pressed for, and secured, G8 support for the extension of the HIPC initiative by another two years, potentially allowing another 10 countries to benefit from debt relief in excess of $30 billion.

Finance Ministers will report back by the end of the year on progress, and on further measures to ensure that the poorest countries have a sustainable exit from debt.

Consumer Price Index

20. **Mr. Forth:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the current level of the consumer price index. [179142]

Ruth Kelly: Thanks to the macro-economic reforms this Government put in place upon coming to power, the UK economy is enjoying the longest period of sustained low inflation for 49 years.

CPI inflation stood at 1.5 per cent. in May. The 2004 Budget forecast is for it to rise back to its symmetrical 2 per cent. target by the second half of next year.

Efficiency Review

21. **Mr. Quentin Davies:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Defence regarding the efficiency review being conducted by Sir Peter Gershon. [179143]

Mr. Boateng: Treasury Ministers meet their Ministry of Defence counterparts frequently to discuss a range of issues, including the Efficiency Review. The Ministry of Defence is working closely with Sir Peter Gershon and his team to maximise the benefits of the efficiency review for front-line services.

House Prices

22. **Mr. Gordon Prentice:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will take steps to moderate the rise in house prices. [179144]

Ruth Kelly: In Budget 2003, the Chancellor noted that a reduction in housing market volatility would enhance macro-economic stability. He asked Kate Barker to review housing supply in the UK, and David Miles to review the UK mortgage market.

At the time of Budget 2004, both reviews presented their final reports. The Government have welcomed their analysis and recommendations for action.

As recommended in the Barker Review, the Government are implementing a programme of change to the planning system and to the delivery of development, consulting with stakeholders as necessary.

The Government endorses David Miles' conclusion that urgent reform is desirable to make the UK mortgage market work better for consumers in a number of areas. The FSA has in train reforms in the mortgage market, which will move to statutory regulation on 31 October. The Chancellor has asked the FSA to consider and report on the further reforms proposed by David Miles.

Fuel Efficiency (Vehicles)

23. **Mr. Chaytor:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to use the tax system to improve the fuel efficiency of vehicles. [179145]

John Healey: The Chancellor considers all relevant environmental, economic and social factors in deciding taxation policy. He will announce any changes to taxation policy in the context of his Budget statement.

The Government already has a good record in using taxation to improve fuel efficiency through, for example, duty differentials in favour of cleaner fuels and graduated vehicle excise duty and the reform of company car taxation which provide incentives for more fuel efficient cars.

Development Aid

24. **Ms Munn:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on his plans to set a timetable to reach the 0.7 per cent. of gross national income target for overseas aid by 2008. [179146]

John Healey: I refer to the answer I gave my hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow, Maryhill (Ann McKechin) earlier today.

Better Regulation

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his answer of 27 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1727W, on Regulation, (1) what assessment he made of the recommendation of the Mandelkern Group on Better Regulation Final Report of 13 November 2001 that simplification does not mean deregulation; and what his assessment is of the adoption of this recommendation in the Better Regulation Action Plan published by the European Commission in June 2002; [178859]

(2) which section of the European Commission's Better Regulation Action Plan provides for the removal of existing legislation which is in force; and if he will make a statement. [178861]

Ruth Kelly: The Government is working with its partners, through the joint initiative on regulatory reform, to ensure that the framework of existing European law is subject to thorough review.

In doing this it is building on the Commission's Better Regulation Action Plan, which was developed in response to the Mandelkern Report as well as the Commission's White Paper on European Governance, and other submissions.

The simplification workstream of this Action Plan covers a broad range of tools. Its aim is to reduce the costs of regulation while preserving overall policy objectives. This can include removal or revision of existing legislation. The Commission's progress report stated that simplification includes "efforts to simplify the substance of a policy . . . in such cases it may be necessary to adapt or to entirely rethink the legislative approach."[1]

[1] COM (2003) 623 final: First Report on the Implementation of the Framework Action Plan Updating and Simplifying the Community Acquis, p8

Burmese Imports

Vera Baird: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the value of imports of *(a)* marine products, *(b)* shrimp and prawns and *(c)* timber from Burma has been in the past five financial years; and which companies import each type of product. [179228]

John Healey: I refer my hon. friend to the answer I gave her on 5 March 2003, *Official Report*, column 1104W. The value of imports requested is shown in the table as follows.

£ million

Goods	*Financial year*	*Value*
Marine products (exc shrimps and prawns)[1]	1999–2000	1.787
	2000–01	3.362
	2001–02	4.359
	2002–03	4.082
	2003–04	3.372
Shrimps and prawns[2]	1999–2000	2.433
	2000–2001	3.324
	2001–2002	3.462
	2002–2003	4.025
	2003–2004	1.547
Timber[3]	1999–2000	2.022
	2000–2001	3.434
	2001–2002	3.624
	2002–2003	1.637
	2003–2004	1.541

[1] Live fish; fish and fish fillets, molluscs and other aquatic invertebrates fresh, chilled, frozen, smoked, dried, salted or in brine; fish products not fit for human consumption

[2] Fresh, chilled, frozen, boiled, salted, dried or in brine.

[3] Rough, worked, planed, moulded etc, including plywood, fibreboard etc, but excluding made up artless of wood

Source:
Overseas Trade Statistics, HMCE

Vera Baird: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total value of imports from Burma was in 2003, broken down by import. [179231]

John Healey: The total value of imports from Burma in 2003, broken down by commodity is published in the Overseas Trade Statistics and is available on Customs' website www.uktradeinfo.com). It is shown in the table as follows:

Imports from Burma to the United Kingdom: General Trade: 2003

	Value (£)
Articles of apparel and clothing accessories	51,313,636
Fish, crustaceans, molluscs and aquatic invertebrates and preparations thereof	5,881,650
Power generating machinery and equipment	1,153,475
Furniture and parts thereof, bedding, mattresses etc.	1,055,213
Cork and wood manufactures (excluding furniture)	998,606
Cork and wood	968,649
Vegetables and fruit	439,924
Parcel post	195,853
Miscellaneous manufactured articles not elsewhere specified	109,966
Textile yarn, fabrics, made up articles etc.	78,304
Footwear	13,983
Non-metallic mineral manufactures not elsewhere specified	13,621
General industrial machinery and equipment and machine parts not elsewhere specified	7,806
Other transport equipment	7,088
Manufactures of metal not elsewhere specified	5,793
Coffee, tea, cocoa, spices and manufactures thereof	4,227
Tobacco and tobacco manufactures	1,482
Machinery specialized for particular industries	704
Elsewhere specified	625
Total	62,250,605

Source:
Overseas Trade Statistics, HMCE

Compensation Payments

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many compensation payments were made to members of the public by his Department and its agencies in each year since 1997–98, broken down by the *(a)* amount paid and *(b)* reason for payment. [172895]

Ruth Kelly: Compensation payments made to members of the public by the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Departments and agencies are made in a wide variety of circumstances, including:

costs following Tribunal/Court rulings and those arising from Adjudicator and Ombudsman reviews;

property damage;

compensation paid by HM Customs and Excise, VAT, tax regimes;

compensation paid to meet out of pocket expenses, inconvenience or hardship caused by officials failure or delay.

Losses and special payments are required to be published in Departmental Annual Accounts in accordance with the Resource Accounting Manual.

Developing Countries (Poverty)

Mrs. Betty Williams: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on UK investment in tackling poverty in developing countries. [179136]

Ruth Kelly: UK investment in tackling poverty has doubled in real terms since 1997 and will rise to nearly £5 billion by 2005–06—the highest ever level of UK development aid.

By 2005–06, 90 per cent. of the aid budget will be spent in the world's poorest countries, including a record £1 billion bilateral aid programme in Africa. We are also working closely with developing countries to ensure that aid is spent effectively and reaches those in greatest need.

As I announced in the Budget, we will not cut aid in the new spending round, but will continue to increase the resources that we give to the developing world.

Employment

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of *(a)* men, *(b)* women and *(c)* men and women in total of working age were in employment in each quarter since 1984. [177958]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. David Willetts, dated 17 June 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about employment. (177958)

The attached table gives the available rates of working age employment by gender for 3 month periods since 1984. These estimates, from the Labour Force Survey (LFS), have been seasonally adjusted. Estimates are only available for a single 3 month period of the years 1984 to 1991 inclusive.

As with any sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to sampling variability.

Working age employment rates[1,2] by sex—1984 to 2004, for three month periods as shown

United Kingdom *Per cent.*

Three month period (ending in month shown)	*All people of working age*	*Males aged 16–64*	*Females aged 16–59*
1984—May	68.8	77.9	58.7
1986—May	69.6	78.3	60.1
1986—May	69.7	77.8	60.9
1987—May	70.4	78.1	62.1
1968—May	72.7	80.5	64.2
1989—May	74.5	82.2	66.1
1990—May	74.9	82.4	66.8
1991—May	73.2	799	66.0
1992			
May	71.2	76.5	65.4
August	70.8	76.2	65.1
November	70.6	75.6	65.2
1993			
February	70.3	75.2	65.0
May	70.3	75.0	65.2
August	70.3	75.1	65.1
November	70.4	75.2	65.1
1994			
February	70.4	75.4	65.1
May	70.7	75.6	65.4
August	70.8	75.8	65.6
November	71.0	76.1	65.5
1995			
February	71.0	76.1	65.6
May	71.2	76.4	65.8
August	71.5	76.5	66.1
November	71.6	76.5	66.3
1996			
February	71.8	76.6	66.7
May	71.8	76.6	66.7
August	71.9	76.8	66.7
November	72.2	77.1	67.0
1997			
February	72.5	77.5	67.2
May	72.7	77.7	67.4
August	72.8	77.9	67.4
November	73.1	78.2	67.6
1998			
February	73.2	78.5	67.6
May	73.3	78.4	67.9
August	73.6	78.7	68.2
November	73.7	78.7	68.5
1999			
February	73.9	78.8	687
May	73.8	78.7	68.6
August	74.0	79.0	688
November	74.2	79.1	68.9
2000			
February	74.2	791	69.0
May	74.4	79.4	69.1
August	74.7	79.4	69.6
November	74.4	79.2	69.2
2001			
February	74.6	79.5	69.5
May	74.6	79.5	69.4
August	74.5	79.3	69.3
November	74.5	792	69.4
2002			
February	74.4	79.1	69.4
May	74.4	79.0	696
August	74.5	79.0	69.7
November	74.6	79.3	697
2003			
February	74.6	79.2	69.7
May	74.7	79.3	69.7
August	74.6	79.3	69.5
November	74.6	79.1	69.7
2004			
February	74.9	79.5	70.1

[1] Working age people in employment as a percentage of the working age population in the relevant gender group.

[2] Seasonally adjusted

Source:
ONS Labour Force Survey

Equitable Life

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent representations he has received about Equitable Life. [179131]

Ruth Kelly: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave to the right hon. Member for Bracknell (Mr. Mackay) earlier today in the House.

EU Unemployment Rates

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the latest Eurostat figures for state unemployment rates among young people in each EU country are. [177970]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 10 June 2004]:* The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. David Willetts, dated 17 June 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about unemployment amongst young people in the UK and other EU countries. (177970)

The table overleaf gives the latest Eurostat figures for seasonally adjusted unemployment rates amongst young people, defined as 16–24 year olds for the UK and 15–24 year olds for other countries. UK data are taken from the latest UK Labour Force Survey results published in May 2004. Data for other countries are taken from Eurostat's Unemployment Press Release published on 2 June 2004. In some cases, these figures may appear more up-to-date than the UK figure; however, as the table illustrates, these more recent figures are often based on modelled extrapolation of the data from the most recent Labour Force Surveys in each country, rather than on direst survey measurement.

Unemployment rates (seasonally adjusted) for young people in the UK and other EU countries[1]

Country	Latest Labour Force Survey reference period supplied to Eurostat—period ending	Reference period for extrapolated Eurostat estimates	Unemployment rate (Percentage)
Austria	June 2003	April 2004	7.3
Belgium	December 2003	April 2004	22.0
Cyprus	June 2003	April 2004	9.6
Czech Republic	December 2003	April 2004	20.0
Denmark	December 2003	March 2004	10.5
Estonia	December 2003	April 2004	20.3
Finland	December 2003	April 2004	20.6
France	December 2003	April 2004	20.7
Germany	June 2003	April 2004	11.1
Greece	December 2003	December 2003	27.1
Hungary	December 2003	April 2004	12.8
Ireland	December 2003	April 2004	8.1
Italy	December 2003	January 2004	27.1
Spain	December 2003	April 2004	22.5
Latvia	December 2003	April 2004	17.3
Lithuania	December 2003	April 2004	23.8
Luxembourg	March 2003	April 2004	12.1
Malta	December 2003	April 2004	21.2
Netherlands	December 2003	March 2004	9.0
Poland	December 2003	April 2004	39.6
Portugal	December 2003	April 2004	15.4
Slovak Republic	December 2003	April 2004	29.3
Slovenia	December 2003	April 2004	15.7
Sweden	December 2003	April 2004	16.1
United Kingdom	March 2004[2]	Not applicable	[2]11.8

[1] As published by Eurostat, 2 June 2004.

[2] UK estimate published by Office for National Statistics on 12 May 2004 for the period January to March 2004.

G8 Summit (Scotland)

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he intends to make specific funding available for security arrangements for the G8 summit in Scotland next year. [179204]

Mr. Boateng: It is too early to say what the actual costs will be. The Treasury and Scottish Executive will assess and agree what the additional costs are. Extra funds will be made available by the UK Government to help meet the agreed additional policing costs.

Housing Stock Transfer

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what stamp duty is payable on large-scale voluntary stock transfer of council housing. [179112]

Ruth Kelly: Section 71 of Finance Act 2003 exempts such transfers from Stamp Duty Land Tax provided the transfer is to a Registered Social Landlord.

Life Expectancy

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what life expectancy in the UK was in each year since 1997, broken down by *(a)* region, *(b)* sex and *(c)* social class. [178935]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Mike Hancock, dated 17 June 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking what life expectancy in the UK was in each year since 1997, broken down by *(a)* region, *(b)* sex and *(c)* social class. (178935)

Figures for life expectancy at birth for the UK and its constituent countries are published annually by the Government Actuary's Department. Figures for life expectancy at birth for English regions are published annually by ONS. Both sets of figures are based on three-year rolling averages and are calculated separately for males and females. The most recent available figures are for 2000–02. Figures covering the years requested are given in the attached tables 1 and 2.

Figures by social class are derived using the ONS Longitudinal Study. This is a 1 per cent. sample of the population and therefore annual comparisons cannot be made reliably. The most recent available figures are for 1997–99 and are provided in the attached table 3.

Table 1: Life expectancy at birth
United Kingdom and constituent countries, since the period 1996–98

Area	Life expectancy in years Three-year rolling averages 1996–98	1997–99	1998–2000	1999–01	2000–02
Male					
United Kingdom	74.50	74.73	75.00	75.33	75.68
England	74.76	74.99	75.28	75.62	75.97
Wales	74.24	74.36	74.66	74.92	75.41
Scotland	72.40	72.64	72.84	73.10	73.31
Northern Ireland	74.16	74.27	74.48	74.79	75.20
Female					
United Kingdom	79.56	79.69	79.90	80.13	80.39
England	79.76	79.89	80.10	80.34	80.60
Wales	79.28	79.36	79.59	79.80	80.08
Scotland	78.04	78.18	78.35	78.56	78.78
Northern Ireland	79.49	79.46	79.55	79.75	80.13

Source:
Government Actuary's Department (http://www.gad.gov.uk/Life_Tables/Interim_Life_tables.htm)

Table 2: Life expectancy at birth
Government Office Regions in England, since the period 1996–98

Area	Life expectancy in years Three-year rolling averages 1996–98	1997–99	1998–2000	1999–01	2000–02
Male					
North East	73.2	73.5	73.8	74.2	74.5
North West	73.4	73.5	73.8	74.1	74.5
Yorkshire and The Humber	74.2	74.4	74.7	75.1	75.4
East Midlands	74.9	75.1	75.3	75.7	76.1
West Midlands	74.5	74.6	74.8	75.1	75.4
East of England	76.1	76.3	76.5	76.8	77.0
London	74.4	74.8	75.0	75.4	75.7
South East	76.1	76.3	76.6	76.9	77.2
South West	76.0	76.4	76.6	76.9	77.1
Female					
North East	78.4	78.5	78.7	79.0	79.3
North West	78.5	78.6	78.9	79.1	79.4
Yorkshire and The Humber	79.3	79.5	79.7	80.0	80.2
East Midlands	79.8	79.9	80.1	80.3	80.5
West Midlands	79.6	79.7	79.8	80.0	80.3
East of England	80.7	80.8	81.0	81.2	81.4
London	79.9	80.0	80.3	80.5	80.7
South East	80.7	80.9	81.1	81.3	81.5
South West	81.0	81.1	81.3	81.5	81.7

Source:
Office for National Statistics (http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk = 8841)

Table 3: Life expectancy at birth by social class
England and Wales, period 1997–99

	Social class	Life expectancy in years Three-year rolling average Male	Female
I	Professional	78.5	82.8
II	Managerial and technical/intermediate	77.5	81.5
III N	Skilled non-manual	76.2	81.2
III M	Skilled manual	74.7	79.2
IV	Partly skilled	72.7	78.5
V	Unskilled	71.1	77.1

Source:
Donkin A, Goldblatt P and Lynch K. (2002) Inequalities in life expectancy by social class, 1972–1999. Health Statistics Quarterly 15, 5–15.

Mental Health

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people have left employment in his Department because of *(a)* anxiety, *(b)* stress, *(c)* depression and *(d)* other mental health reasons in each year since 1997. [175678]

Ruth Kelly: The number of staff leaving the Treasury on ill-health retirement since 1997 is as follows:

	Number
1997	2
1998	2
1999	1
2000	—
2001	1
2002	—
2003	1
2004	None to date

None of these ill-health retirements was specifically related to anxiety, stress, depression or other mental health reasons.

National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship

Brian Cotter: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he plans to launch the National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship. [179250]

John Healey: The Department for Education and Skills and the Small Business Service are working with the chairman and board to develop the National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship. It is expected to be launched by the end of 2004.

Penalty Notices (Tax Returns)

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many cheques were encashed from penalty notices incorrectly issued by the Inland Revenue for filing late tax returns in each of the past five years; and what their total value was in each of those years. [179205]

Dawn Primarolo: The Inland Revenue does not hold this information.

Where a penalty notice has been issued incorrectly we apologise unreservedly and cancel it straight away. There is no question of anyone who sent in their return on time being required to pay a penalty.

Property Taxation (Indexation)

Mr. Love: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his policy is on the linking of stamp duty and inheritance tax thresholds to house price growth indices; and if he will make a statement on homeowners' tax liabilities. [178740]

Ruth Kelly: All tax rates and thresholds are kept under review. Current receipts from Stamp Duty Land Tax and Inheritance Tax are provided in Table C8 of the Red Book.

Redundancies

Paul Holmes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many redundancies were notified, broken down by nation and region, in each year since 2002; what these figures represent as a percentage of the total work force, broken down by nation and region; and if he will make a statement. [178013]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 10 June 2004]:* The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Paul Holmes, dated 17 June 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about redundancy. (178013)

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) provides estimates of redundancies experienced by survey respondents in the three month period before their inclusion in the survey. The attached table gives LFS estimates for the numbers of redundancies in each country and region of the UK in the three month periods ending in February of the years 2002 to 2004.

The table also shows the rate of redundancies per 1,000 employees in each country and region of the UK for these periods. Redundancies are presented as rates per 1,000 employees rather than as percentages for consistency with published sources.

The data are not seasonally adjusted. As with any statistical sample survey, estimates for the LFS are subject to sampling variability.

Redundancy levels by region, three months ending February each year from 2002–04

	2002	*2003*	*2004*
United Kingdom	209	183	137
Great Britain	204	179	134
England	173	149	116
North East	11	[1]—	[1]—
North West (Inc. Merseyside)	25	20	22
Yorkshire and Humberside	11	13	10
East Midlands	14	13	11
West Midlands	20	21	10
Eastern	17	16	16
London	24	21	15
South East	35	24	17
South West	15	11	[1]—
Wales	11	13	[1]—
Scotland	21	18	13
Northern Ireland	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—

[1] Sample size too small for reliable estimate.

Note:
Data are not seasonally adjusted.

Source:
ONS Labour Force Survey.

Redundancy rates[1] by region (redundancies per 1,000 employees in area), three months ending February each year from 2002–04

	2002	*2003*	*2004*
United Kingdom	8.6	7.5	5.7
Great Britain	8.7	7.6	5.7
England	8.5	7.3	5.7
North East	11.8	[2]—	[2]—
North West (Inc. Merseyside)	9.5	7.3	8.0
Yorkshire and Humberside	5.4	6.4	4.9
East Midlands	7.6	7.3	6.0
West Midlands	9.4	9.5	4.8
Eastern	7.4	7.0	6.8
London	8.2	7.3	5.3
South East	10.0	7.1	5.1
South West	7.5	5.3	[2]—
Wales	10.2	11.7	[2]—
Scotland	9.8	8.3	6.1
Northern Ireland	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—

[1] The redundancy rate is based on the ratio of the redundancy level for the given quarter to the number of employees in the previous quarter, multiplied by 1,000.

[2] Sample size too small for reliable estimate.
Note:
Data are not seasonally adjusted.
Source:
ONS Labour Force Survey.

Regulatory Impact Assessments

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the statement of 10 December 2003, *Official Report*, column 1064, on the Pre-Budget Report, how many regulatory impact assessments produced by his Department referring to the 147 regulations for reform or removal have been placed in the Library, including their reference numbers; and what the estimated benefit to business is in each case. [178831]

Ruth Kelly: None of the 147 deregulatory measures announced in the Pre-Budget Report were the responsibility of HM Treasury. The Department did not, therefore, produce any of the Regulatory Impact Assessments (RIAs) linked to the 147 regulations for reform or removal which were announced with the Pre-Budget Report in December 2003. Among the regulations to reform there were several measures with direct benefits for business, including the increase to the statutory audit threshold, which freed 69,000 businesses from the obligation to undergo an independent audit. Final RIAs are laid in the House Library, and all published RIAs are also available from departmental websites.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Travel Office

Dame Marion Roe: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what the arrangements are for the future of the Travel Office; and if he will make a statement. [179743]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The Travel Office contract, managed jointly by the two Houses, has been let for a number of years to American Express. This contract will expire at the end of August. Following a full open competition under EU procurement rules, it has been decided to award the new contract to Carlson Wagonlit Travel (CWT). CWT will offer a wide range of services, including a continuing implant in the Palace of Westminster, access to preferential prices for both air and rail travel, foreign exchange, and an internet self-booking facility for those who wish to book online. It is expected that the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations will apply, and the jobs of existing staff in the Travel Office will thus be protected.

TRANSPORT

"O" Licence

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the minimum number of hours per month is that a CPC-qualified transport manager has to work to qualify for the "O" Licence. [179009]

Dr. Howells: There are no minimum limits to how much time transport managers should spend on their duties. The requirement is for the individual to have continuous and effective responsibility for the transport operations of a business. It is for the licensing authority, a traffic commissioner, to decide in each case if an applicant for a goods operator's licence satisfies this requirement.

Bus Subsidy Review

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the timetable is for the *(a)* completion and *(b)* publication of the Government's bus subsidy review. [179193]

Mr. McNulty: The bus subsidy review is nearing completion and the outcome will be announced later this summer.

Donaldson Inquiry

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many recommendations from the May 1994 Donaldson Inquiry have been implemented; and which recommendations have yet to be implemented. [178922]

Mr. Jamieson: Lord Donaldson made 103 recommendations (some of which are subdivided still further), and the vast majority have been implemented. Additionally, there are a small number of instances where legislative developments in the International Maritime Organization or the European Community have made the recommendation redundant.

The following recommendations remain outstanding: recommendations 59 (Marine Environmental High Risk Areas) and 64 (ship-to-ship transfer in Lyme Bay), on which a substantial amount of work has been done, but which have not yet been fully implemented; recommendations 58 and 60, which are consequential to recommendation 59; and recommendation 67d, awaiting the development of experience of transponders on merchant ships.

Irish-registered Vehicles

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the number of Irish-registered vehicles on the roads of the United Kingdom; and how many of these vehicles have up-to-date road tax. [178952]

Mr. Jamieson: No figures are available for the number of Republic of Ireland vehicles in use on UK roads. Visiting Irish vehicles are exempt from UK licensing and registration requirements providing they are in this country for less than six months in any 12 and are registered and licensed in Ireland. If at any time a vehicle used here on Irish plates is stopped by the police, the driver is responsible for demonstrating that he/she is entitled to use it in the UK.

Keepers of Irish registered vehicles who fail to observe these requirements are subject to the same enforcement and prosecution procedures as UK motorists.

DVLA is currently working with the police and local authorities to gather information on all visiting vehicles to clarify the extent of the evasion problem and to introduce effective counter measures.

London Underground (Crime)

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 8 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 284W, on crime (public transport), how many crimes were committed on each London Underground line in each year since 1998; and how many were *(a)* assaults, *(b)* of a sexual nature and *(c)* robberies, broken down by individual Underground line. [179176]

Mr. McNulty: The British Transport Police (BTP) have advised me that this information is not readily available and could be compiled only at disproportionate cost.

Mobile Phones (Accidents)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* deaths and *(b)* injuries have been caused in each of the last five years by people using mobile phones while driving. [178447]

Mr. Jamieson *[holding answer 14 June 2004]:* The information requested is not currently available. However, research has shown that using a mobile phone while driving is distracting and drivers are four times more likely to have an accident if they do so.

ONS Reports (Emissions)

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether Ministers or officials have made representations to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) regarding the omission of figures relating to greenhouse gas emissions from air and freight transport from ONS reports; and if he will make a statement. [177231]

Mr. McNulty: Ministers have made no representations to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) regarding the content of their reports. The content of ONS reports is a matter for ONS on which they alone take the final decision after consultation as appropriate. The Department for Transport (DfT) is involved in the quality assurance process for some ONS reports, which involves discussion at official level. The quality assurance process may identify data quality or methodological issues that lead to ONS changing their reports.

As part of the quality assurance process, DfT officials contacted ONS seeking clarifications on the methodology used to produce the figures on GHG emissions in the Environmental Accounts published on 20 May. Subsequently, the DfT Head of Freight Statistics informed ONS they were unable to reconcile the figures in the Environmental Accounts with DfT data on the road freight industry. In this case, DfT Statisticians were concerned about data quality and methodological issues. ONS agreed that further investigation was required. ONS has publicly made clear that: "The Office for National Statistics (ONS) alone took the decision on the final wording of the news release on the environmental accounts (report, 27 May 2004). There was no improper pressure from the Department for Transport or anywhere else. ONS could not satisfy itself fully on technical concerns over the reconciliation of figures on road freight emissions based on alternative definitions and hence decided that it would not be appropriate to focus upon transport emissions. There was nothing unusual about the process adopted on this occasion and it is completely wrong to suggest that the figures were "withdrawn" or "removed from the ... report". The published datasets were not amended in any way and were published on the National Statistics website in their entirety."

Once the reconciliation work is completed it will be made publicly available.

Timetables

Mr. Blizzard: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will require train operating companies and bus companies to consult each other in advance of making changes to timetables. [178753]

Mr. McNulty: Provision already exists to promote integration between different local transport modes. Local authorities take into account rail and bus modes when drawing up local transport plans. For rail timetables, the Strategic Rail Authority requires franchise operators to consult with stakeholders during their preparation. Train operators are also required to participate in Integrated Transport Schemes designated in the agreements.

The arrangements for the provision of bus services differ significantly from those of the franchised rail services. The majority of bus services are provided on a commercial basis by private operators. Decisions by bus operating companies on whether to consult with train operators in advance of making timetable changes are a commercial judgment for the company involved.

Strategic Rail Authority

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many staff were employed by the Strategic Rail Authority in each year since its creation, broken down by department. [178866]

Mr. McNulty: At its inception, in February 2001, the SRA employed 337 people. Records of staff numbers by Directorate have been kept in their present form since October 2002 and the figures are as follows:

Directorate	*Headcount at 16 October 2002*	*Headcount at 31 March 2003*	*Headcount at 31 March 2004*
Freight	21	23	21
Operations	126	134	135
Strategic planning	36	40	84
Technical	4	6	9
Finance and commercial	77	88	100
Deputy Chief Executive	30	31	46

Directorate	Headcount at 16 October 2002	Headcount at 31 March 2003	Headcount at 31 March 2004
Communications	30	29	26
Chairman's office	18	29	28
Community Rail Development	0	0	5
Total	342	380	454

Oxford-East Anglia Rail Link

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on progress of the proposed East West railway link between Oxford and East Anglia. [178917]

Mr. McNulty: An updated Business Case has now been put forward by the East-West Rail Consortium for the Western End of the East West Rail Link. This proposal involves upgrading and re-opening the line between Oxford and Bedford. Officials at the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister are considering the updated business case, particularly in light of the potential impact of the scheme on the delivery of the Sustainable Communities Plan. The Strategic Rail Authority is also considering the Western End business case. Any appraisal will need to be considered against other priorities, the outcome of the current rail review and the Government's spending review.

Ship-to-ship Transfers

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when his Department first started reviewing draft proposals concerning the regulation of ship-to-ship transfer activities within UK waters; and when his Department expects to complete the review. [178921]

Mr. Jamieson: Draft legislation and guidelines to control ship-to-ship transfer operations within UK waters were developed in 1998. Since that time, owners and operators of ships carrying out ship-to-ship transfer operations in UK waters have adhered to guidelines based on the draft legislation.

With the increased traffic in heavy fuel oil coming out of the Baltic area, we are reconsidering this draft legislation. I anticipate that revised draft legislation will go out to consultation in the autumn.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Attainment Gap

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps his Department is taking to decrease the gap in attainment between children from higher and lower socio-economic groups. [177941]

Mr. Miliband: All our education policies are based on the conviction that every child should be able to achieve at the highest level of their potential, irrespective of background. Our national key stage strategies have an essential role to play in narrowing the attainment gap by raising expectations of all our children.

But we also have targeted programmes aimed at narrowing the gap. We are investing heavily in our Sure Start programmes, with additional funding of £669 million by 2007–08 compared with 2004–05, because we know that the early years of a child's life are crucial in determining the outcomes for children when they grow up.

The Excellence in Cities programme which now includes Leadership Incentive Grant (LIG) and Behaviour Improvement Plans (BIP) is making a real difference—as are measures to tackle underperformance which provide support and challenge to schools and authorities falling below floor targets. In terms of five good GCSEs, schools in EiC whole authority areas improved at more than twice the average of non-EiC schools. And after the first year of the BIP (2002–03), unauthorised absence across secondary schools in the programme in the initial 34 LEAs dropped from 3.03 per cent. to 2.94 per cent. In primary schools the corresponding figures were a drop in unauthorised absence from 1.29 per cent. to 1.17 per cent. Fixed term exclusions dropped by 11 per cent. in secondary schools.

The number of schools below the Government's floor targets for attainment at Key Stage 4 has dropped sharply: in 2000, the number of schools below 20 per cent. was 241—that figure had dropped to 114 in 2003.

Child Care

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what definition the Government use of a child care place; and if he will make a statement. [175695]

Margaret Hodge: Child care places are defined to include: places for pre-school children in day nurseries or with child minders which last four hours or longer per day[1]; places for children receiving nursery education which, combined with the nursery education, last at least four hours per day[2]; and places for statutory school age children aged up to 14 (16 for those with special educational needs or disabilities) in breakfast or after school clubs or with child minders for any length of time, or in holiday play schemes of four hours or longer per day. In addition, the Government also provide a guarantee of a free nursery education place for every three and four-year-old whose parents want one. A nursery education place consists of a minimum of five two and half hour sessions per week for 33 weeks of the year.

The number of child care places created between April 1997 and March 2004 is 1,006,000 helping some 1,812,000 children. This shows an increase in the stock of child care places, taking into account turnover, of 541,000 helping some 991,000 children.

[1] Where places are provided for pre-school children as part of the Children's Centre or Neighbourhood Nurseries programme, the provision must have the capacity to deliver a minimum of 10 hours care per day.

[2] Prior to April 2004 the definition of a child care place for pre-school children included any place lasting at least three and a half hours per day.

Children's Homes

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what quality standards have to be met for privately-run children's homes to operate and to accommodate children placed by local authorities.[178493]

Margaret Hodge: All children's homes are statutorily required to comply with the Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and are expected to meet the Children's Homes National Minimum Standards. The standards are intended to be qualitative in that they provide a tool for judging the quality of life experienced by children cared for in a home, but they are also designed to be measurable. The Commission for Social Care Inspection is responsible for the registration and inspection of children's homes against these standards and encourages improvement in the quality of the care provided.

Domestic Violence

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what work his Department has undertaken on the potential for domestic violence work to be done via the new children's centres. [178993]

Margaret Hodge: Children's centres have the flexibility to develop family support services according to local need. Many Sure Start local programmes already operate a range of initiatives related to tackling domestic violence, and we will look to build on this good practice as the children's centre network expands.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skill (1) what assessment he has made of the availability of materials to educate children and young people about domestic violence; how many schools had access to such material in *(a)* 2002 and *(b)* 2003; and how many now have access to such material; [178819]

(2) what discussions he has had with the Home Secretary with regard to including information about domestic violence in the personal health and social education curriculum. [178822]

Margaret Hodge: Within Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship there is already scope to discuss domestic violence, including how families deal with it and where to go for help. Individual schools and teachers decide on the materials they use in the delivery of PSHE. The Department does not assess the availability of materials.

Last year the DfES supported the production of a resource pack for schools called "Watch Over Me" which deals with a range of personal safety issues including a domestic violence scenario. The resource was sent to all secondary schools and pupil referral units. A teaching pack called "Does Sex Make a Difference?" which includes a module on domestic violence, is available to all schools through the teachernet website.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what work the Minister for Children has undertaken to ensure that information sharing systems provide adequate protection for children whose mothers have experienced domestic violence and moved away from a violent partner. [178820]

Margaret Hodge: The information-sharing databases that we propose to establish and operate under clause 8 of the Children Bill will have stringent security arrangements to ensure that only appropriate practitioners are able to access a child's record. Audit trails will enable those managing the databases to identify attempts to gain inappropriate access. Regulations will be made in due course governing the disclosure of information from the databases. Detailed guidance will be produced for practitioners and those managing the databases, to ensure that information on the databases is handled properly and consistently. This guidance will draw on the experience of the Trailblazer pilots currently under way.

We will also examine with these pilots what is the best way to handle the details of children whose mothers have experienced domestic violence and have moved away from a violent partner. A number of pilots have the facility for certain details, such as address, to be blocked out where that is considered necessary to provide reassurance. Subject to the passage of the Children Bill, the proposed regulations and guidance for wider roll-out of information-sharing databases will include any specific arrangements we conclude are necessary for the records of children in such circumstances.

Education Bodies (Staffing)

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the full-time equivalent headcount of the *(a)* Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education, *(b)* Learning and Teaching Support Network and *(c)* Higher Education Academy was in each year since 1997; and how much funding was allocated to each body in each year. [178206]

Alan Johnson: The available staffing and funding figures for the Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (ILTHE) and Learning and Teaching Support Network (LTSN) are given in the table. The bulk of LTSN funding is spread over 24 subject centres for setting up, supporting and developing learning and teaching networks and promoting and sharing good practice through projects and events. The HE Academy is currently being set up and both the LTSN and ILTHE have recently joined the academy. It advises that it currently has 60 staff (including those from the ILTHE and LTSN). HEFCE have allocated a budget of £1.9 million for the academy until the end of the 2003/04 academic year.

Academic year	HEFCE funding (£ million) ILTHE	LTSN	Staffing ILTHE	LTSN
1998/99	[1]1.19	—	—	—
1999/2000	1	5	14	1 (plus 1 secondee)
2000/01	[2]—	6	23	15
2001/02	[2]—	6	25	18
2002/03	[2]—	6.5	28	23
2003/04	[2]—	6.5	30	22

[1] Initial start up costs—no staff in post.
[2] From 2000/01—no HEFCE funding. ILTHE sustained through membership fees.

Education Costs (London)

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total cost of educating a child to age 16 was in each London borough in the most recent period for which figures are available. [169998]

Mr. Miliband: The information is available for the 2003–04 financial year and is contained within the following table:

Funding per pupil to age 16

LEA name	£
Camden	70,900
Greenwich	64,600
Hackney	75,500
Hammersmith and Fulham	70,000
Islington	71,600
Kensington and Chelsea	73,500
Lambeth	73,600
Lewisham	67,900
Southwark	69,000
Tower Hamlets	75,100
Wandsworth	63,800
Westminster	68,600
Barking and Dagenham	54,300
Barnet	51,200
Bexley	47,300
Brent	60,000
Bromley	47,300
Croydon	51,900
Ealing	57,300
Enfield	53,500
Haringey	64,100
Harrow	51,700
Havering	47,100
Hillingdon	50,000
Hounslow	55,500
Kingston upon Thames	47,600
Merton	51,700
Newham	61,500
Redbridge	49,300
Richmond upon Thames	47,400
Sutton	48,000
Waltham Forest	57,700

Notes:
1. Funding includes education formula spending plus all revenue grants in DfES departmental expenditure limits relevant to pupils aged 3–15. EMAs and grants not allocated at LEA level are excluded.
2. The pupil numbers used are those underlying the EFS settlement calculations.
3. Figures are provisional as some grants in 2003–04 have not yet been finalised/audited.
4. Figures are rounded to the nearest £100.
5. Figures are based on eight years of funding for pupils ages three to 10 and five years of funding for pupils ages 11–15.
6. Calculations are based on an LEA's total funding per pupil in 2003–04 multiplied by the average number of years in school.

Education Funding

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding was spent per pupil in Crosby in each of the last seven years. [177864]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is submitted to the Department according to local education authority areas rather than districts within an area. Crosby is a district of Sefton LEA. The information for Sefton LEA is as follows:

Net current expenditure

	Pre-primary education	Primary education	Pre-primary and primary	Secondary education	£ Special
1996–97	—	n/a	1,880	2,640	19,520
1997–98	n/a	n/a	1,890	2,630	20,190
1998–99	n/a	n/a	2,010	2,690	19,950
1999–2000	4,690	2,170	2,180	2,780	23,920
2000–01	16,780	2,330	2,410	3,010	26,120
2001–02	30,560	2,570	2,740	3,430	27,410
2002–03		2,840	—	3,640	—

Notes:
1. The financial data are taken from Sefton LEAs' Section 52 outturn statement submitted to the DfES from 1999–2000 onwards and the ODPM's RO1 statement previously. 2002–03 data is subject to change by the LEA. Expenditure was not distinguished between pre-primary and primary sectors until the inception of the Section 52 outturn statement in 1999–2000. Hence, for consistency, the combined unit cost is provided since 1996–97 but due to LEA expenditure on pupils in independent nurseries the unit cost for primary education is a more robust measure.
2. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they include an apportionment of LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
3. Spending in 1997–98 reflects the transfer of monies from local government to central Government for the nursery vouchers scheme. These were returned to local government from 1998–99.
4. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEA.

5. The NCE per pupil figures for pre-primary and primary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in the pre-primary sector and maintained primary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained nursery and primary schools sector.
6. The NCE per pupil figures for secondary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained secondary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained secondary schools sector.
7. The NCE per pupil figures for special schools relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained special schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained special schools sector.
8. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent in Crosby from the *(a)* Connexions Programme, *(b)* the Positive Activities for Young People Programme, *(c)* Millennium Volunteers Programme, *(d)* Transforming Youth Work Development Fund, *(e)* Community Champions Fund and *(f)* Pathfinder Young Community Champions Fund. [177893]

Margaret Hodge: Most of this funding is directed through local accountable bodies that cover a wider geographical area than Crosby. In each case, that body has the freedom to use its funding flexibly, within a broad overall framework, to meet local priorities. Each of the respective local bodies may have used some of its funding in the Crosby area but, in most cases, it is not possible to identify expenditure at that level of detail. The table shows how much funding has been paid by the DfES to each of the relevant local bodies for the initiatives concerned.

Initiative/funding steam	*Local accountable body (i.e. area covered)*	*Amount paid (£)*	*Initiative start date*
(a) Connexions Service	Greater Merseyside Connexions Partnership	43,286,000	2001
(b) Positive Activities for Young People	Greater Merseyside Connexions Partnership (but note that figure relates to Crosby area)	69,000	2003
(c) Millennium Volunteers	Various (figure relates to Sefton area)	369,000	2000
(d) Transforming Youth Work Development Fund	Sefton Council	176,000	2002
(e) Community Champions Fund	Various (figure relates to Sefton area)	19,000	2001
(f) Pathfinder Young Community Champions Fund	(see note 2 below)	—	—

Notes:
1. The amounts shown relate to the period from the start of each initiative until the end of the 2003–04 financial year (and are rounded to the nearest £000).
2. PYCCF is delivered in Community Cohesion Pathfinder Areas. In the North West these include Bury, Rochdale and East Lancashire but not Sefton/Crosby.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding was spent per pupil in *(a)* Kent and *(b)* Liverpool in (i) 1997 and (ii) 2003. [166957]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is contained in the following table:

Net current expenditure per pupil

£

	Primary	*Pre-primary and primary*	*Secondary*
Kent LEA			
1997–98	n/a	1,890	2,900
2002–03	2,790	—	3,620
Liverpool LEA			
1997–98	n/a	1,880	2,640
2002–03	3,250	—	4,150

Notes:
1. The financial data are taken from Kent and Liverpool's Section 52 Outturn Statements submitted to the DfES; the 1997–98 financial data is taken from the ODPM's R01 statement. The 1997–98 figures are Kent LEA prior to local government reorganisation. From 1998–99 onwards parts of Kent LEA became Rochester and Gillingham LEAs. 1999–2000 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance. Figures are rounded to the nearest £10. 2002–03 data is subject to change by the LEA.
2. Expenditure was not distinguished between pre-primary and primary sectors until the inception of the Section 52 Outturn Statement in 1999–2000.
3. The outturn 2002–03 captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they include an apportionment of LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers.
4. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEAs.
5. The NCE per pupil figures for pre-primary and primary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in the pre-primary sector and maintained primary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained nursery and primary schools sector.
6. The NCE per pupil figures for secondary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in the maintained secondary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained secondary schools sector.
7. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding was spent per pupil in Stoke-on-Trent North in each of the last seven years. [177643]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is submitted to the Department according to local education authority areas rather than constituency level and as such the figures provided are for Stoke-on-Trent LEA.

Net current expenditure

£

	Pre-primary education	Primary education	Pre-primary and primary	Secondary education	Special
1996–97	n/a	n/a	1,660	2,290	9,630
1997–98	n/a	n/a	1,790	2,540	11,240
1998–99	n/a	n/a	2,040	2,580	14,560
1999–2000	4,610	2,180	2,240	2,880	14,130
2000–01	5,570	2,330	2,400	3,170	14,690
2001–02	8,070	2,650	2,760	3,440	15,840
2002–03	—	2,710	—	3,430	—

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from local education authorities1 Section 52 Outturn Statement submitted to the DfES from 1999–2000 onwards and the ODPM's RO1 statement previously. 2002–03 data is subject to change by the LEA. Prior to local government reorganisation (LGR) in 1997–98 Stoke-on-Trent LEA was part of Staffordshire LEA. Consequently figures for 1996–97 are for pre-LGR Staffordshire LEA and figures for 1997–98 onwards are for Stoke-on-Trent LEA.
2. Spending in 1997–98 reflects the transfer of moneys from local government to central government for the nursery vouchers scheme. These were returned to local government from 1998–99. 1999–2000 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
3. Expenditure was not distinguished between pre-primary and primary sectors until the inception of the Section 52 outturn statement in 1999–2000.
4. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they include an apportionment of LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers.
5. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEA.
6. The NCE per pupil figures for pre-primary and primary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in the pre-primary sector and maintained primary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained nursery and primary schools sector.
7. The NCE per pupil figures for secondary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained secondary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained secondary schools sector.
8. The NCE per pupil figures for special schools relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained special schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained special schools sector.
9. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much was spent per pupil in 2003–04 for each school in the London borough of Wandsworth. [179041]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is not yet available. The Department is due to collect the data relating to the 2003–04 financial year in October 2004.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the change in the average amount spent *(a)* per primary school pupil and *(b)* per secondary school pupil has been in Warrington, North since 1997. [174658]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is submitted to the Department according to local education authority areas rather than districts within an area. Warrington, North is a district of Warrington local education authority. The information for Warrington LEA is as follows:

Net current expenditure

£

	Primary education	Pre-primary and primary education	Secondary education
1997–98	n/a	2,080	2,900
1998–99	n/a	2,130	2,760
1999–2000	2,210	2,240	2,870
2000–01	2,390	2,480	3,070
2001–02	2,580	2,720	3,240
2002–03	2,690	2,840	3,500

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from local education authorities' Section 52 Outturn Statements submitted to the DfES from 1999–2000 onwards and the ODPM's R01 statement previously.
2. Spending in 1997–98 reflects the transfer of moneys from local government to central government for the nursery vouchers scheme. These were returned to local government in 1998–99. Prior to local government reorganisation (LGR) in 1998–99 Warrington LEA was included as part of Cheshire LEA and consequently the 1997–98 figures are for Cheshire LEA (pre-LGR). 1999–2000 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance. Expenditure was not distinguished between pre-primary and primary sectors until the inception of Section 52 in 1999–2000.
3. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they include an apportionment of LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10. 2002–03 data is subject to change by the LEA.
4. Real terms figures used are adjusted to 2002–03 prices using the March 2004 GDP deflators.
5. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEA.
6. The NCE per pupil figures for pre-primary and primary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in the pre-primary sector and maintained primary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained nursery and primary schools sector.
7. The NCE per pupil figures for secondary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained secondary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained secondary schools sector.
8. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

Educational Psychologists

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what assessment his Department

has made of future *(a)* demand and *(b)* supply of educational psychologists across local education authorities; and if he will make a statement; [178060]

(2) how many qualified educational psychologists were employed by local education authorities in each of the past five years; and if he will make a statement. [176061]

Margaret Hodge: Decisions on the recruitment, retention and deployment of educational psychologists (EPs) are matters for local authorities as employers to determine in light of local circumstances and available resources.

We are aware that there are shortages of EPs in some areas and that, as with other professions, there is a likelihood of a good many experienced staff retiring in the near future. In view of this, the Department has facilitated discussions involving a range of partners, including representatives of the Local Government Association, on developing a new shorter entry training route for EPs. The scheme under discussion would ensure EPs qualifying in six rather than eight years. Years 1–3 would be the Psychology degree course followed by a further three years of postgraduate training built around work placements. Years 4–6 would be managed by higher education institutions in partnership with local authorities.

The new route would require significant additional funding, the case for which will need to be considered within the wider context of the 2004 Spending Review. Ministers are currently considering the final allocation of the SR settlement in the light of our overall priorities.

As regards the number of EPs employed by local authorities, I would refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 4 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1420W.

Excellence in Cities (Leyton)

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how Leyton schools have benefited from the Excellence in Cities initiative. [178193]

Mr. Miliband: Waltham Forest has been part of the Excellence in Cities programme since it was launched in 1999 and the following Leyton Schools have benefited from EiC funding: Barclay Infant School, Barclay Junior School, Belmont Park School, Church Mead Junior School, Dawlish Primary School, George Mitchell School, Newport Infant School, Newport Junior School, Norlington School for Boys, The Beaumont School and The Lammas School.

EiC in Waltham Forest has given Leyton schools access to enhanced opportunities for their gifted and talented pupils, learning mentors for those with barriers to learning, and Learning Support Units to tackle disruption. The programme also provides City Learning Centres and EiC Action Zones as well as leading on to Aim Higher and incorporating the Behaviour Improvement programme and Leadership Incentive Grant.

The following table shows the number of children in Leyton benefiting from EiC, and the annual spend per pupil for the years that Leyton schools have been part of EiC.

	Number of children	Total EiC expenditure (£)[1]	Spend per pupil (£)
1999–2000	1,196	58,854	49.21
2000–01	3,865	[2]229,446	59.37
2001–02	4,017	420,027	104.56
2002–03	4,150	460,277	110.91
2003–04	4,338	905,957	208.84

[1] All funding figures supplied by Waltham Forest Excellence in Cities Team.
[2] Estimated.

Note:
The increase in the rate of EiC funding and the number of pupils benefiting in 2000–01 was due to the Leyton primary schools becoming part of the EiC Primary Extension Pilot. The increase in funding in 2003–04 was due to the introduction of the Leadership Incentive Grant and the Behaviour Improvement Programme.

Implementation Review Unit

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many members of staff are employed by the Implementation Review Unit, broken down by *(a)* civil servants including grade, *(b)* advisers and *(c)* salary. [177603]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 10 June 2004]:* Three civil servants employed by DfES work for the secretariat to the Implementation Review Unit as part of their role. A Grade 7 works 0.5 of the full-time equivalent for the Unit's secretariat, and a Higher Executive Officer and Higher Executive Officer (Developmental) both work 0.8 of the full-time equivalent.

Two advisers work for the Implementation Review Unit; an LEA adviser for 50 days per year, and an education adviser for 20 days per year.

Salary ranges for London DfES staff are as follows:

Grade 7: £41,114 to £51,574

HEO(D): £24,881 to £35,814

HEO: £24,881 to £29,615

The salary range for the LEA adviser is £42,777 to £47,058 pro rata. The salary range for the education adviser is £53,586 to £75,147 pro rata.

Muslim Schools

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether it is his policy to encourage the setting up of single-sex Muslim schools. [178253]

Mr. Miliband: The Government's overriding aim is to raise standards. As part of this we welcome faith schools in the maintained sector, to meet clear demand from parents. Decisions about whether or not new schools should open are made at a local level by the School Organisation Committee for the area or by the Schools Adjudicator if the Committee cannot reach a unanimous decision.

Nursery Day Care (Wandsworth)

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many nursery day care places there are in the London borough of Wandsworth; and what contribution towards the cost of these places is paid by *(a)* central Government and *(b)* local authorities. [179050]

Margaret Hodge: There were 3,520 registered full day care places in Wandsworth at March 2004. The total expenditure and breakdown of local authority subsidy on day care in Wandsworth is not held centrally.

All three and four-year-olds are entitled to a free part-time early education place, of 2.5 hours per day, 33 weeks of the year, which may be offset against the cost of full day care. From April 2003, funding to support the delivery of that entitlement was consolidated within the under fives sub-block of each LA's Education Formula Spending Share (EFSS)—the main source of education funding. The under fives sub-block for Wandsworth is £18.5 million for 2004–05.

Wandsworth have been allocated Sure Start General Grant Funding of almost £3 million for 2004–06, which includes a target to create 1,138 child care places, including full day care and wrap around care to early education places. A ring-fenced element within the Grant can be used to support and sustain existing good quality child care.

The Government are also supporting the creation of full day care in Wandsworth through Neighbourhood Nursery funding. Wandsworth has been developing seven nursery projects to deliver 140 places. 35 of these places are already open across four existing nurseries and revenue grant of £189,000 is available over the next three years to support them. We have made available £343,000 of capital funding to help with the building works.

Child care fees payable by parents are also subsidised by central Government through the tax credit system. This amounts in total to approximately £700 million per year, although it is not possible to provide a figure for the amount claimed in Wandsworth.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to his answer of 26 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1690W, on test and examination costs, if he will make a statement on the initial costs of *(a)* AS, *(b)* A-level and *(c)* A2 examinations for all schools for 2002–03. [179101]

Mr. Miliband: Through the examinations modernisation programme, which was referred to in the answer to the previous question, we are continuing to analyse the costs incurred by colleges and school on general examinations, and to look at ways of improving the effectiveness and efficiency of school and college exam office administration.

PFI Projects

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much capital funding was made available through private finance initiative projects for *(a)* primary school and *(b)* secondary school buildings in Stoke-on-Trent North in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [177628]

Mr. Miliband: There is a private finance initiative project in Stoke-on-Trent which provides energy, energy management and repair and maintenance work to all 122 maintained schools in the Local Education Authority. The contract was signed in November 2000 with Transform Schools (Stoke) and was supported by £93 million PFI credits. Of the £93 million PFI credits, £13.4 million were made available for the primary school buildings and £7.7 million for the secondary school buildings in the Stoke-on-Trent North constituency.

Probationary Teachers

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what monitoring he has carried out of the support for probationary teachers; and what evidence he has collated on the effect probationary teacher support has on teacher retention. [178808]

Mr. Miliband: An independent report from the Institute of Education, "Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Statutory Arrangements for the Induction of Newly Qualified Teachers", in May 2002 found that the quality of provision for newly qualified teachers has improved since the introduction of induction.

Research by the General Teaching Council for England has shown that teachers who are exposed to any sort of professional development opportunities are more likely to be in teaching in five years time compared with those who have not had such opportunities.

Qualifications

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people of working age in *(a)* Merseyside and *(b)* the UK had no qualifications in the last year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [177914]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The table shows the proportion and number of working age[1] people with no qualifications in *(a)* Merseyside and *(b)* the United Kingdom. Data comes from the winter quarter of the Labour Force Survey (LFS) in 2003–04.

	No qualifications	
	Percentage	*Number*
Qualification level		
Merseyside	23.3	194,000
United Kingdom	14.4	5,223,000

Reducing the number of people with no qualifications is a major priority for the Government. The Skills Strategy announced a number of measures to address this issue. In particular, we are introducing a new entitlement to free learning for all those studying for those first Level 2 qualifications as a foundation for employability. We have also said that we will introduce a new adult learning grant of up to £30 a week for full-time learners studying for their first Level 2 qualification. We want to improve the quality of information, advice and guidance to help people choose the right course for them. Basic skills needs for those without qualifications are being addressed through the Government's Skills for Life strategy. We have also asked regional development agencies to work with the Learning and Skills Council, the Small Business Service, Jobcentre Plus, Skills for Business and others to ensure that the aims of Skills Strategy are delivered in a more co-ordinated way that connects with the needs of employers and individuals at the regional, local and sectoral level through the creation of strong and effective Regional Skills Partnerships.

[1] Working age population refers to males aged 16–64 and females aged 16–59.

Schools (Use Outside School Hours)

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary school buildings are used outside of school hours, broken down by region; and if he will make a statement. [179100]

Mr. Miliband: We do not currently hold the data requested and it could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Secondary Schools

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Tatton (Mr. Osborne) of 27 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1699, if he will list the successful schools that have expanded; and whether these schools were in areas with surplus places. [177876]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 10 June 2004]:* The local School Organisation Committee has approved proposals for the expansion of the following successful and popular schools, and the necessary capital support has been agreed by the DfES.

Fairfield High School, Bristol

Maiden Erlegh School, Wokingham

Bury Church of England High School, Bury

Parrenthorn High School, Bury

The percentage of secondary surplus places in Bristol is 11 per cent., in Wokingham it is 3 per cent., and in Bury it is 2 per cent.

DfES is working with a number of further schools that wish to expand.

Sector Skills Councils

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many sector skills councils are *(a)* operational and *(b)* planned for the next three years. [177376]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: We are making good progress in setting up sector skills councils (SSCs). To date there are 16 licensed SSCs. Plans are well advanced for the development of proposals for a further eight SSCs and, in addition, the SSDA continues to work with a number of other sectors. We currently anticipate that there will be around 23 SSCs in place by the end of the year covering the majority of the work force. Any further additions to the network will depend on employers coming forward with appropriate proposals.

Sure Start

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what action his Department is taking to support disadvantaged children who do not live in wards targeted by the Sure Start programme. [177942]

Margaret Hodge: The broad Sure Start programme benefits children, parents and communities across the country, delivering free early education for all three and four-year-olds, improving the quality and affordability of child care, and creating at least 250,000 new child care places by 2006. Sure Start children's centres are initially being established in the 20 per cent. most disadvantaged wards in England. We recognise however that disadvantage exists outside of these wards, and the Sure Start Unit is considering proposals from local authorities to locate centres in such areas. The Government's long-term aim is to develop a children's centre in every community.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to assess the effectiveness of Sure Start programmes. [178360]

Margaret Hodge: The Sure Start Unit carries out thorough evaluations of all its major programmes. A comprehensive national evaluation of Sure Start Local Programmes began in 2001 and is examining the effectiveness of Sure Start for children, families and communities by tracking a sample of 8,000 children and their families over time. Local Sure Start programmes also undertake their local educations to inform their programmes delivery. An evaluation of the Neighbourhood Nursery Initiative began in 2003 and is assessing how far it is helping to reduce unemployment by providing high quality child care in disadvantaged areas. Further information, including findings to date, is available on the Sure Start website www.surestart/ensuringquality/research

Teaching Posts (Greater London)

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on recruitment and retention of primary and secondary school teachers at schools in the Greater London area. [179039]

Mr. Miliband: Recruitment and retention of both primary and secondary teachers across the Greater London area has improved considerably over the last couple of years. The provisional figures for 2004 show an increase of a further 600 FTE teachers across London taking the total to 61,500, compared to the figure in 1997 of 56,800. The full-time vacancy rates across all the maintained sectors—nursery, primary, secondary and special schools have dropped each year from 3.5 per cent. in 2001 to a provisional 1.4 per cent. in 2004; leaving a total of 680 vacancies across London as at January this year.

Training

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding has been given for the training of people in Stoke-on-Trent, North constituency since 1997; under what projects; and if he will make a statement. [177631]

Alan Johnson: The Department allocates funds for education and training in the post-16 learning and skills sector to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The LSC then decides the funding allocations at local level to learning providers. Information about these allocated is not collected by the Department. This is an operational matter and the responsibility of the LSC. Mark Haysom, the LSC's Chief Executive, will write to my hon. Friend and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library. Some information will only be available from 2001 when the LSC assumed responsibility for funding some programmes from Training and Enterprise

Councils and the Department. Information for these programmes prior to 2001 is not available at parliamentary constituency level.

Truancy

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what targets his Department has set in relation to reducing truancy in each year up to 2006; and what levels of funding will be made available in each year. [177886]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 14 June 2004]:* Promoting regular school attendance and reducing levels of absence are key components of the Government's strategy to raise educational standards. The current national Public Service Agreement (PSA) target is to reduce the 2002 level of unauthorised absence by 10 per cent. in this school year; and to sustain the new lower level and improve overall attendance levels thereafter.

To help achieve the current PSA target, the Department set the 56 LEAs facing some of the greatest challenges individual stretching targets to reduce unauthorised absence in 2003/04. These LEAs received extra resources to assist in improving support to schools and pupils with poor attendance and in devising better strategic approaches to attendance management.

In all, the National Behaviour and Attendance Strategy is investing around £120 million in 2004–05 and £155 million in 2005–06 on measures to reduce exclusions or provide education for excluded pupils, to support vulnerable and disaffected pupils back into the classroom, to improve behaviour and to tackle truancy and improve school attendance. As many of the measures schools and LEAs implement will improve both pupils' behaviour and their attendance—and action in respect of one will often have an impact on the other—it is not possible to identify separately the level of expenditure allocated to tackling truancy alone.

PRIME MINISTER

Lockerbie

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Prime Minister what action he has taken as a result of his meeting with Lockerbie relatives on 24 May; and what next steps he proposes to take. [179210]

The Prime Minister: We are taking forward issues raised by the representatives of the Lockerbie families at the meeting on 24 May. The families will be informed of the outcome.

DEFENCE

Airfield Support Services Project

Jim Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what opportunities have been given, and what further opportunities are planned, to allow bidders for the Airfield Support Services Project to explain their proposals to relevant trade union officials and to respond to any concerns raised. [178930]

Mr. Ingram: The opportunity for trade union involvement with the Airfield Support Services Project has been continuous throughout the project and remains ongoing. Each bidding consortia formally briefed the trade union side during September 2002 and it is believed that at least one consortium subsequently arranged additional meetings. There is no restriction on the bidding consortia in this regard and they are free to engage with the trade unions if requested or if they see fit to do so.

Army Medal Office

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many staff have been employed at the Army Medal Office to assist in the issuing of the Iraq medal since the beginning of the year; and how many are on *(a)* casual and *(b)* fixed-term contracts. [178995]

Mr. Caplin: The Army Medal Office established a section to deal specifically with the Iraq medal on 4 May 2004. The section comprises eight staff, including four on casual contracts and one on a fixed-term appointment.

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many applications for the Suez Canal Zone *(a)* medal and *(b)* clasp have been (i) received and (ii) processed by the Army Medal Office in Droitwich Spa. [179020]

Mr. Caplin: As at 11 June 2004, the Army Medal Office has received over 28,500 applications for the Suez Canal Zone medal or clasp. Information that would distinguish applications for the medal and the clasp is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Of the 6,650 applications that have been processed, 5,315 medals and 418 clasps have been issued.

BAE Systems

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on what date he first became aware of a letter from the then director of the Serious Fraud Office written on 8 March 2001 to Sir Kevin Tebbit, the Permanent Secretary of his Department, regarding allegations of fraud involving BAE Systems. [176076]

Mr. Hoon: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for North Norfolk (Norman Lamb) on 25 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1613W.

Baha Musa

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the investigation into the death of Baha Musa. [177578]

Mr. Ingram: The investigation into the death of Baha Musa has been completed and the case is currently under consideration by Army Legal Services. It is therefore not appropriate for me to give any further details at this stage.

Detainee Interviewing Training

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether any members of the British armed forces have *(a)* received training and *(b)* been involved in providing

training at the United States army training school at Fort Benning in Georgia for the interviewing of detainees. [174014]

Mr. Ingram: No members of the British armed forces have received training, or been involved in providing training, at Fort Benning for the interviewing of detainees.

Detainees (Hooding)

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the issue of the hooding of detainees was raised by officials of the International Committee of the Red Cross during meetings with British Army officers in 2003. [174281]

Mr. Hoon *[holding answer 25 May 2004]:* Details of discussions between the armed forces and the International Committee of the Red Cross are confidential, but the issue was discussed.

Iraq

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he first made representations to his US counterpart regarding the International Committee of the Red Cross report on maltreatment of Iraqi prisoners by US forces in Iraq. [174592]

Mr. Rammell *[holding answer 20 May 2004]:* I have been asked to reply.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Hampstead and Highgate (Glenda Jackson) on 26 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 163SW.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on what date his Department provided the classified examples on targets chosen in the war to which reference is made at paragraph 30 of the Government's response to the Defence Committee report on Lessons of Iraq, HC635. [178745]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence wrote to the Committee on 14 July 2003.

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the written ministerial statement of 8 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 4–5WS, on Iraq, what the average time between an allegation by an Iraqi civilian of *(a)* ill-treatment, *(b)* injury and *(c)* death as a result of British military action and the opening of investigations into the allegations has been. [179018]

Mr. Ingram: The Royal Military Police have a standard target of initiating an investigation within 24 hours of notification of an incident or allegation and this target has been met in all 75 cases investigated in Iraq which I referred to in my statement on 8 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 4–5WS.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 17 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 663W, on Iraq, on what date in March 2003 Mr. Zaher died. [179027]

Mr. Ingram: Mr. Zaher Sabti Zaher died on 24 March 2003.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what *(a)* the names of the individuals and *(b)* the (i) date and (ii) nature of the incident concerned is in each of the 75 cases of civilian deaths that are subject to investigation in Iraq. [179052]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 15 June 2004]:* Of the 75 investigations of incidents involving civilians, 37 relate to deaths. The names of the deceased individuals (where known), together with the date and nature of the incident, are shown in the following table:

Date of incident	*Name*	*Nature of incident*
24 March 2003	Zaher Sabti Zaher	Operations
12 April 2003	Kuwaiti national—further details unknown	RTA
12 April 2003	Tanik S. Mahmud	Detainee
29 April 2003	Ather Khalaf Mohammed	Operations
3 May 2003	Ali Salaam	Operations
7 May 2003	Dyab Rehman Nasser	RTA
8 May 2003	Radhi Nama	Detainee
11 May 2003	Nadhem Abdullah	Operations
17 May 2003	Abdul Al Jubba Mousa Ali	Detainee
18 May 2003	Hamza Abdul Hussein Al Askary	RTA
18 May 2003	Ahmed Jabber Kareem	Detainee
24 May 2003	Said Shabram	Detainee
26 May 2003	Wael Jaber Raheem	Operations
15 June 2003	Jassim Yassim Jabbar Al Shimillwy	RTA
2 August 2003	Hassan Abbad Saied	Operations
7 August 2003	A. J. Khalif	Detainee
21 August 2003	Hanan S. Matrud	Operations
24 August 2003	W. F. Muzban	Operations
15 September 2003	Baha Daoud Salim Musa	Detainee
27 December 2003	N. S. Khoulief	Operations
1 January 2004	G. G. H. D. Roomi	Operations
2 February 2004	S. A. Maltouf	Operations
3 February 2004	S. Kazim	RTA
18 February 2004	M. D. Habash	RTA
5 March 2004	Unknown	Operations
7 March 2004	S. A. A. Hamdy	Operations
27 March 2004	A. A. A. Abdullah	RTA
4 April 2004	Unknown	Operations
6 April 2004	Unknown	Operations
6 April 2004	Unknown	Operations
7 April 2004	Unknown	Operations
12 April 2004	Unknown	Operations
3 May 2004	Unknown	Operations
8 May 2004	Unknown	Operations
8 May 2004	Unknown	Operations
10 May 2004	Unknown	Operations
14 May 2004	Unknown	Operations

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the families of Iraqi individuals whose deaths are or have been the subject of Special Investigation Branch inquiries have been given copies of official autopsy reports or equivalent documents. [177580]

Mr. Ingram: In the majority of cases under investigation by the Special Investigations Branch into deaths of Iraqi civilians, families have refused to allow autopsies to be conducted on their relatives.

A United Kingdom pathologist has carried out autopsies on two Iraqi civilians whose deaths are being investigated by the Special Investigation Branch. Once these investigations are complete, and subject to the permission of the pathologist who conducted the autopsy, these reports could be made available to the relatives, if requested.

Prisons

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which independent observer groups are given permission to visit British-run military and civilian prisons in Iraq; to whom their reports have been made on prison conditions; to what level within his Department such reports are sent; and if he will make a statement. [177247]

Mr. Ingram: The International Committee of the Red Cross regularly visit the British-run Divisional Temporary Detention Facility in Iraq. Discussions routinely take place between local ICRC representatives and British military staff to resolve any issues relating to the conditions in which internees are held. The ICRC produce confidential working papers which are passed to the UK General Officer Commanding in Iraq, and are staffed through the chain of command to the permanent joint headquarters and to the MOD head office if appropriate. Ministers are routinely kept abreast of the results of the ICRCs continuing scrutiny of British-run detention facilities in Iraq, and any substantive issues raised by the ICRC are promptly brought to their attention.

Medals

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the findings were of the review referred to in his Department's press statement of 17 May relating to the award of an Arctic medal. [175437]

Mr. Caplin: No press statement was issued on 17 May. I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Nottingham, North (Mr. Allen) on 1 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 595–96.

Sensory Deprivation

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what directives are in force in the armed forces on the use of sensory deprivation techniques. [158884]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 4 March 2004]:* Members of the armed forces may temporarily obscure the vision of apprehended individuals, for reasons of operational security, for example, while they are being transported through militarily sensitive areas. Vision may not be obscured during interrogation. The directive issued by the Chief of Joint Operations to the Commander of British Forces in Iraq covers methods that may be used when obscuring vision, and circumstances in which these methods may be applied.

No other forms of sensory deprivation are permitted. Joint Warfare Publication 1–10 (Prisoner of War Handling) states that no forms of physical or mental pressure may be used for the purpose of inducing answers to questions, which would preclude the use of 'white noise' or any other sensory deprivation techniques.

Special Investigation Branch

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the freedom of information rules are governing access to completed reports of the Special Investigation Branch in which no further action is recommended. [158885]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 4 March 2004]:* From 1 January 2005 any request for information held by the Ministry of Defence will be considered in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act. A number of exemptions might apply to information contained in Royal Military Police Special Investigation Branch reports, and requests will therefore need to be given case-by-case consideration.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the average length of Special Investigations Branch investigations was in the last five years; and in what proportion of cases action was taken. [158862]

Mr. Ingram: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Children Victims of War

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what requests he has received from the organisation, Children Victims of War for a meeting to discuss the current situation in *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* Afghanistan. [178726]

Hilary Benn: I have not received any requests from the organisation Children Victims of War to discuss either Iraq or Afghanistan.

UNESCO

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what meetings the British ambassador to UNESCO has attended since 1 January in his official capacity. [178123]

Hilary Benn: Our ambassador to UNESCO has attended a large number of meetings so far this year in his official capacity. These include the UNESCO Executive Board biannual session and related preparatory meetings with other board members, the European Union Group, the Commonwealth Group and the Geneva Group; UNESCO-hosted meetings on a wide range of issues falling within the organisation's Education, Science, Culture and Communications portfolio; meetings with DFID and other government Departments on policy towards UNESCO; and, a series of meetings in the UK and Paris on the re-establishment of the UK National Commission for UNESCO.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Overseas Investment

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if the Government will introduce legislation that will enable the Government to ban investment in countries where investment will have a negative impact and is contrary to British Government advice. [179229]

Mr. MacShane: Investment usually has a positive, not a negative, impact. It is essential for sustainable economic development. In some exceptional circumstances, the Government have considered it

appropriate not to encourage investment on the grounds that investment is not appropriate so long as the regime in question continues to suppress the basic rights of its people. In certain cases, British companies have disinvested at the request of the British Government. The Government have no plans however to introduce legislation in these cases. Any such legislation would in any event have to be compatible with the prohibitions on restrictions on the free movement of capital in the EC Treaty.

Guantanamo Bay

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the medical records of United Kingdom citizens who were detained in Guantanamo Bay were made available to the interrogators; and whether Her Majesty's Government has received representations from those former British detainees held at Guantanamo Bay in respect of their treatment while under detention. [179023]

Mr. Mullin: The Government are not aware of any requests from the US authorities for the UK medical records of the British nationals detained at Guantanamo Bay, The question of whether medical teams at Guantanamo Bay have made their medical records of the detainees available to the interrogators is a matter for the US authorities.

We have made it very clear to the US authorities that the British detainees at Guantanamo Bay are entitled to be treated humanely. British officials have visited Guantanamo Bay on seven occasions to check on the welfare of the British detainees, most recently in March. None of the former British detainees held at Guantanamo Bay have made representations to the British Government about their treatment there since their return to the UK.

Rwanda

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when the United Kingdom Government first received reports of acts of genocide being carried out in Rwanda; what action the Government took in immediate response; and when.[177663]

Mr. Mullin: Rwandan President Habyarimana, and his Burundian counterpart President Cyprien Ntaryamira, were killed on 6 April 1994 when their aircraft was shot down over Kigali. Very soon afterwards, the British Government became aware of media and NGO reports of large-scale violence and mass killings in Rwanda. The then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mark Lennox-Boyd) set out the Government's position and reaction to these events in a debate on Rwanda on 24 May 1994, *Official Report*, columns 312–15.

Working Holidaymaker Scheme

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many people applied in 2003 for a visa under the Commonwealth working holidaymaker scheme; and from which countries they came. [178778]

Mr. Mullin: There are 53 Commonwealth Member countries, including the United Kingdom. Zimbabwe is no longer a Commonwealth Member. However, for immigration purposes Zimbabwean nationals continue to be treated as Commonwealth nationals. Zimbabwean nationals remain, therefore, eligible to apply working holidaymaker visas. No applications from Kiribati, Nauru, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu or Vanuatu nationals were received in 2003. The following table shows the number of applications made for working holidaymaker visas during 2003, broken down by nationality.

	Number of applications
Antigua and Barbuda	2
Australia	32,614
Bahamas	2
Bangladesh	217
Barbados	45
Belize	6
Botswana	192
BNO's and BOC's[1]	87
Brunei	3
Cameroon	72
Canada	6,612
Cyprus	25
Dominica	15
Fiji	30
Gambia	8
Ghana	4,684
Grenada	7
Guyana	81
India	10,860
Jamaica	894
Kenya	173
Lesotho	15
Malawi	125
Malaysia	3,469
Maldives	4
Malta	96
Mauritius	125
Mozambique	10
Namibia	1,824
New Zealand	8,796
Nigeria	331
Pakistan	128
Papua New Guinea	3
Seychelles	19
Sierra Leone	16
Singapore	247
South Africa	34,242
Sri Lanka	5,184
St. Kitts and Nevis	4
St. Lucia	33
St. Vincent	24
Swaziland	228
Tanzania	28
Tonga	1
Trinidad and Tobago	749
Uganda	68
Zambia	111
Zimbabwe	996

[1] British National Overseas (BNO) and British Overseas Citizen (BOC).

Source:

These statistics are obtained from UKvisas Central Reference System.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many applications under the working holidaymaker scheme from *(a)* India, *(b)* Pakistan, *(c)* Sri Lanka, *(d)* Nigeria, *(e)* Ghana, *(f)* Sierra Leone, *(g)* Jamaica and *(h)* all new Commonwealth countries have been (i) received, (ii) refused, (iii) granted and (iv) appealed against since 25 August 2003. [178782]

Mr. Mullin: There are 53 Commonwealth member countries, including the United Kingdom. The following table provides the figures requested between 25 August 2003 and 28 May 2004. These statistics are obtained from UKvisas central reference system. The figures in the table may not add up due to some applications received in 2003 overlapping into 2004 and equally the same applies for some received in 2002 but processed in 2003. Some applications are also withdrawn by the applicant before a decision is made.

	Received	*Refused*	*Issued*	*Appealed*
India	9,995	5,276	1,728	1,445
Pakistan	96	29	56	4
Sri Lanka	4,935	3,873	1,075	638
Nigeria	220	97	114	42
Ghana	3,143	987	1,977	161
Sierra Leone	13	11	3	2
Jamaica	442	145	269	30
All CC[1]	73,468	13,287	53,476	2,763

[1] All Commonwealth countries, including those broken down within the table.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Child Support Agency

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in what percentage of cases relating to Child Support the Child Support Agency has made an error in *(a)* January 1997, *(b)* January 2000 and *(c)* January 2004; and if he will make a statement. [177452]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Elaine Fox to Miss Anne McIntosh, dated 17 June 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive. As he is currently on leave I am replying on his behalf.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, in what percentage of cases relating to Child Support the Child Support Agency has made an error in *(a)* January 1997, *(b)* January 2000 and *(c)* January 2004; and if he will make a statement.

The Agency does not hold statistically valid information for the percentages of cases where the Agency has made errors in the months quoted in the question.

Financial Assistance Scheme

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to what date he has instructed his Department to work for the publication of draft regulations for the Financial Assistance Scheme. [178593]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer my hon. Friend to my Statement during report stage of the Pensions Bill on 19 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 984–85.

New Deal for 50 Plus

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the New Deal 50 Plus Training Grant will be retained after the changes to the New Deal announced on 19 May. [178863]

Malcolm Wicks: Following the publication of a preliminary paper on the 19 May, today we published our full strategy paper "Building on New Deal: Local solutions meeting individual needs".

The New Deal has already helped over a million people to find jobs and we are continuing to build on this success. The strategy published today will introduce greater flexibility into our employment programmes, providing a service tailored to the needs of individuals, local areas and local employers. Jobcentre Plus District Managers will have increased flexibility to provide whichever type of support is needed to help people move into sustained work.

Our strategy for employment programmes is developing in parallel with the development of the Government's overall skills strategy. As the strands of these strategies develop we will continue to explore the most appropriate way of ensuring that older workers can access the training they need.

Objectives' Programmes

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much public funding has been spent from the *(a)* Objective 1, *(b)* Objective 2 and *(c)* Objective 3 programmes in Crosby, since the programmes' inception. [177866]

Mr. Raynsford: I have been asked to reply.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is the Managing Authority for the European Regional Development Fund in Merseyside. The Department for Work and Pensions hold a similar role for the European Social Fund. Merseyside does not receive Objective 2 or Objective 3 funding and information on levels of European funding at ward level is not held. However Objective 1 public funding is available in the Metropolitan Borough of Sefton, which includes Crosby, and the following table shows how much has been spent from the start of the current programme in 2000 to 14 June 2004. Final figures for domestic match funding only become available as projects complete. As the majority of projects are still under way the figures given for domestic public match funding are estimated using data from the Merseyside Objective 1 programme plan. In addition to the funding shown here it should be noted that almost 50 per cent. of the Objective 1 programme delivers pan-Merseyside projects, to which residents and businesses in the Metropolitan Borough of Sefton also have access.

£

Fund	*European structural funds grant paid*	*Estimated domestic public match funding*
European Regional Development Fund	6,557,069	12,854,600
European Social Fund	8,428,073	26,850,000
Totals	14,985,142	39,704,600

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Competitiveness

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the impact which the UK National Allocation Plan will have on the competitiveness of UK industry. [178483]

Mr. Timms: The UK has set out to implement the EU ETS in a way that meets the twin goals of maintaining UK industry's competitiveness, while maintaining commitment to our environmental goals. As the EU ETS is a new instrument, and, before the start of the first Phase, there remain great uncertainties as to what the EU allowance price may be, detailed analysis of the potential impact on the UK of the scheme was necessary to inform our decisions on implementation. An additional and crucial uncertainty has been how other member states will implement the scheme.

The DTI published an analytical paper on the impact of the EU ETS on UK industry, examining in particular the trading patterns of EU ETS sectors and possible regional dimensions to the impacts. This is available on the DTI website at www.dti.gsi.gov.uk/energy/sepn/euets.shtml. in addition, we commissioned ILEX Energy consultants to examine the possible impact on electricity prices of differing EU allowance prices and the impact on power sector investment. This paper is available on the DTI website, as above. Further work has been commissioned to examine the cross EU impacts on power prices.

This analysis informed the decision for the UK to allocate allowances equal to estimates of what sectors will require in the 2005–07 period under 'with measures' projections. This is to ensure that EU ETS will not impose a reduction in emissions beyond what is expected given current measures. The exception to this is electricity generation, which due to the very limited international competition that the industry faces, has been allocated a reduction below 'with measures' projections in the 2005–07 period.

When the Commission's assessment and decisions on all NAPs have been made, a more informed assessment of the impact of EU ETS on UK industry will be possible.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the impact on UK competitiveness of the national allocation plans of other EU member states; and if she will make a statement. [178485]

Mr. Timms: The UK has closely followed the publication of other member states National Allocation Plans (NAPs), and, has actively called for robust and consistent review by the Commission. The need for the Commission to ensure there is consistent adherence to the principles of the Directive's rules for allocation in each NAP, as well as an assessment of possible State Aid implications from allocation, is crucial to ensure that there is minimal distortion of competition between the EU member states.

The Commission has yet to make final decisions on the 14 NAPs submitted to date, so no detailed assessment of the competition implications for the UK can be made. However, ECOFYS consultancy has been commissioned to analyse key aspects of other member states NAPs that are published, which inform UK comments in the peer review process of NAPs. We will continue to work with the Commission to highlight where clear distortions of competition arise from implementation and breaches of the directive establishing the EU Emissions Trading Scheme.

Departmental Budgets

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what progress has been made towards the 5 per cent. reduction in real terms in her Department's administration budget by 2008, announced by the Chancellor in the House on 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 331. [176502]

Ms Hewitt: The real terms reduction of 5 per cent. or more will be a central feature of the public spending settlements for 2006–08 to be announced in detail later this year.

EU Emissions Trading Scheme

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will urge the European Commission to delay the start of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme until it has approved the National Allocation Plan of each member state. [178484]

Mr. Timms: The EU Emissions Trading Directive and related regulations on the monitoring and reporting of emissions from installations covered by the scheme comes into force in every member state from 1 January 2005.

It is crucial that NAPs from member states that have not been submitted to the Commission in sufficient time ahead of January 2005 are not subject to less thorough or differing assessment or approval mechanisms by the Commission. The UK has asked for clarification on this, and the Commission has stated that the three month period for assessment of the plan by the Commission will be retained, regardless of when the date of notification of the NAP is. Late submissions of National Allocation Plans will not lift the requirements to comply with the directive in any member state, rather it will deny industry the certainty and access to use of the market from the outset to help in compliance. There are no plans to call for a delay in the start of the scheme.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what level of reliance other EU member states are placing on project credits available from the Kyoto project mechanism to meet their national targets for the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. [178486]

Mr. Timms: To date, 14 National Allocation Plans for the EU ETS, including the UK's, have been submitted to the European Commission. Of these, seven have indicated an intention to use purchase of JI and CDM to meet Kyoto targets in 2012. The level of these planned purchases as well as the state of advancement of these policies differs in each plan. In some cases, there are clear plans and substantiated programmes and funding for this, in others there is less clarity as to how firm the policy is, whether it has been budgeted for and from what sources.

The Commission has stated in a letter to all 25 member states on 17 March 2004, that the plans will be assessed for any State Aid implications that allocations may imply, in particular the use of public funds to buy Kyoto credits.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to enable UK companies fully to utilise the Joint Implementation and the Clean Development Mechanism components of the Linking Directive. [178487]

Mr. Timms: The Government are committed to ensuring that UK industry has access to the cost effective reduction potential that the JI and CDM mechanisms offer. The UK Climate Change Programme assumes some of the reductions envisaged to meet the 2010 goals and beyond may be made via use of these mechanisms.

In the context of the EU ETS, the linking amendment on the use of project credits from JI and CDM allows member states the discretion to consider whether or not such credits can be used for compliance against emissions covered by the EU ETS. The decision must be notified to the European Commission by June 2006. The Government are keen to allow the use of project credits from Phase One of the EU ETS and negotiated in favour of allowing early linking of the CDM from 2005. A final decision on how UK companies will be able to use such credits in the 2005–07 period of the EU ETS has not been made.

Fur Farms

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the estimated value in sales was of the fur farming industry in the final year of production. [178285]

Mr. Bradshaw: I have been asked to reply.

Figures on fur farming industry sales could be provided only at disproportionate cost. We estimate that profits were roughly £650,000 a year before production tailed off leading up to the ban.

Northern Cyprus (Trade)

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the value of *(a)* imports from and *(b)* exports to the Turkish Cypriot regime in Northern Cyprus was in the last three years. [178772]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: I am told that information on UK trade in goods is classified by HM Customs and Excise according to the "Geonomenclature of the European Communities". This geographic classification is an internationally agreed list of countries and territories against which figures for overseas trade are represented. It does not distinguish between Turkish Cyprus and Greek Cyprus and so the information requested is not available.

Nuclear Waste

Mr. Page: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of nuclear waste held at approved storage centres in the United Kingdom is from the nuclear weapons programme. [174977]

Mr. Morley: I have been asked to reply.

Of the total combined high level and intermediate level nuclear wastes held at approved storage centres in the United Kingdom and identified in the 2001 United Kingdom Radioactive Waste Inventory, some 24 per cent. is attributable to the nuclear weapons programme. It is predicted that, by the year 2100, this figure will reduce to less than 14 per cent. Approximately 2.6 per cent. of the intermediate level waste is held at AWE Aldermaston and the remainder of the waste is held at British Nuclear Fuels and United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority sites.

Offshore Renewables

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions have taken place between her Department and the offshore renewables industry in the last 12 months. [178723]

Mr. Timms: DTI Ministers and officials have had a large number of meetings on a range of issues with the offshore renewable energy industry over the past 12 months, including with representative organisations such as the British Wind Energy Association. We have also spoken at and attended various industry conferences.

Post Office Reinvention Programme

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what action she intends to take to ensure that most people in Birmingham will be within half a mile of a post office at the completion of the Post Office urban reinvention programme. [177700]

Mr. Timms: The commitment to ensure that at least 95 per cent. of the urban population nationally will still live within one mile of a post office at the end of the urban reinvention programme is an operational responsibility of Post Office Ltd. I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to respond direct to the hon. Member.

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations she has received from Post Office Ltd. on the Post Office urban reinvention programme since 18 May; and if she will make a statement. [177703]

Mr. Timms: I can confirm that there have been contacts since 18 May between Post Office Ltd. and my officials about the company's urban reinvention programme.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Advisers/Consultants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much his Department and its agencies and non-departmental public bodies spent on external consultants and advisers in each of the last three years. [172438]

Fiona Mactaggart: The available information held by the Home Office on the cost of using external consultants in each of the financial years; 2000–01, 2001–02 and 2002–03 is as follows:

	£
2000–2001	27,877,286
2001–2002	21,147,058
2002–2003	N/a

The increase in expenditure on external consultancy in 2000–01 was primarily, due to costs incurred on the Home Office modernisation programme, in particular Information Technology (IT) related consultancy.

The high spend figures for 2001–02 includes the cost ofsetting up the National Probation Directorate and various consultancies on IT Business Change.

We do not hold information on the cost to the Home Office of using external consultants for 2002–03 and to obtain this information would incur disproportionate cost.

The use of external consultants has helped the Department to successfully deliver projects across the office, which has resulted in improved business processes. A further benefit has been the transfer of specialist skills and knowledge to staff.

Asylum and Immigration

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of asylum decisions on average over the last five years were initially rejected and subsequently accepted on appeal; and what percentage of these appeals were accepted on *(a)* first, *(b)* second and *(c)* subsequent appeal. [161053]

Mr. Browne: The information requested is not available on average over the last five years, and could be produced only at disproportionate cost by examination of individual case files.

However, a cohort analysis up to and including appeals at the IAA was carried out for asylum applications made in 2002. It is estimated that around four in ten (42 per cent.) of applications in 2002 resulted in the granting of asylum (10[1] per cent.) or of exceptional leave to remain (23[1] per cent.) or in appeals which were allowed by the IAA adjudicators (a further 10 per cent).

Based on cases where data are available, it is estimated that 77 per cent. of initial refusals of applications made in 2002 resulted in an appeal (i.e. 54 per cent. of applications in 2002 resulted in appeals), and that 10 per cent. of applications made in 2002 resulted in appeals allowed at the IAA.

Asylum cases are determined according to their individual merits. The rates of refusal at initial decision and at appeal change over time reflecting a variety of factors including the changing mix of applicant nationalities, and changing situations in source countries. Over the last five years the vast majority of appeals have been dismissed, at the Immigration Appellate Authority (IAA) and at the Immigration Appeal Tribunal (IAT).

Applications for leave to appeal to the IAT may be brought either by appellants or by the Secretary of State. The majority of applications for leave to appeal to the IAT are dismissed.

The latest available data on initial decisions and appeal outcomes and Judicial Reviews is given in the tables.

[1] Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Initial decisions on applications received for asylum in the United Kingdom[1] excluding dependants: 1999–2003

			Cases considered under normal procedures[3]					
	Initial decisions[2]		*Granted asylum*		*Granted exceptional leave to remain*		*Granted humanitarian protection*	
		Percentage[4]		*Percentage*[4]		*Percentage*[4]		*Percentage*[4]
1999	33,720	(100)	7,815	(36)	2,465	(12)	n/a	—
2000	109,205	(100)	10,375	(11)	11,495	(12)	n/a	—
2001[6]	120,950	(100)	11,450	(9)	20,190	(17)	n/a	—
2002[7]	83,540	(100)	8,270	(10)	20,135	(24)	n/a	—
2003[7]	64,605	(100)	3,880	(6)	3,970	(6)	135	(0)

	Cases considered under normal procedures[3]				*Backlog clearance exercise*[4]			
	Granted discretionary leave		*Refused*		*Granted asylum or exceptional leave to remain under backlog criteria*		*Refused under backlog criteria*[5]	
		Percentage[4]		*Percentage*[4]		*Percentage*[4]		*Percentage*[4]
1999	n/a	—	11,025	(52)	11,140	(90)	1,275	(10)
2000	n/a	—	75,680	(78)	10,325	('89)	1,335	(11)
2001[6]	n/a	—	89,310	(74)	—	—	—	—

	Cases considered under normal procedures[3]				Backlog clearance exercise[4]			
	Granted discretionary leave		Refused		Granted asylum or exceptional leave to remain under backlog criteria[5]		Refused under backlog criteria[5]	
		Percentage[6]		Percentage[6]		Percentage[6]		Percentage[6]
2002[7]	n/a	—	55,130	(66)	—	—	—	—
2003[7]	3,105	(5)	53,510	(83)	—	—	—	—

[1] Figures rounded to the nearest 5.
[2] Information is of initial decisions, excluding the outcome of appeals or other subsequent decisions.
[3] Cases considered under normal procedures may include some cases decided under the backlog criteria.
[4] Percentages for cases considered under normal procedures and those within the backlog clearance exercise are calculated separately.
[5] Cases decided under measures aimed at reducing the pre 1996 asylum application backlog.
[6] Revised figures.
[7] Provisional figures
n/a = Not applicable.

Asylum appeals determined by adjudicators of the Immigration Appellate Authority, excluding dependants: 1999 to 2003[1]

Number of principal appellants

		Allowed[3]		Dismissed[3]		Withdrawn[3]	
	Total determined[2]	Total	As percentage of total determined	Total	As percentage of total determined	Total	As percentage of total determined
1999	19,460	5,280	27	11,135	57	3,050	16
2000	19,395	3,340	17	15,580	80	475	2
2001	43,415	8,155	19	34,440	79	825	2
2002	64,405	13,875	22	48,845	76	1,685	3
2003	81,725	16,070	20	63,810	78	1,845	2

[1] Figures, other than percentages, rounded to the nearest 5. Numbers might not add up due to rounding.
[2] Based on information supplied by the Department for Constitutional Affairs. Determinations do not necessarily relate to appeals received in the same period. Appeals determined by the IAA may relate to initial decisions made in previous years.
[3] Based on data supplied from the Presenting Officers Unit within the Home Office.
Data for 2002 and 2003 are provisional.

Further appeals to the Tribunal, decisions, and the outcome of Tribunal hearings, excluding dependants: 1999 to 2002[1]

Number of principal appellants

	Applications for leave to appeal to the Tribunal[2]		Appeals to the Tribunal[2]	
	Applications	Decisions	Received	Determined
1999	8,635	9,575	2,135	1,790
2000	6,020	5,490	1,615	2,635
2001	15,540	13,540	3,860	3,170
2002[4]	25,600	22,825	6,920	5,565

Outcome of Tribunal Hearings[3]

	Allowed	Dismissed	Withdrawn	Remitted to adjudicators for further consideration
1999	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2000	815	1,385	220	215
2001	475	1,140	150	1,430
2002[4]	620	2,015	225	2,700

Outcome of Tribunal Hearings[3]

Number of principal appellants

	Appellant			Secretary of State		
	Allowed	Dismissed	Withdrawn	Allowed	Dismissed	Withdrawn
1999	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2000	650	1,225	185	170	165	35
2001	315	1,020	125	160	120	25
2002[4]	410	1,880	210	215	130	15

[1] Figures rounded to the nearest 5. Numbers might not add up due to rounding.

[2] Figures based on data supplied by the Department for Constitutional Affairs. Decisions and determinations do not necessarily correspond to applications and appeals received in any given year. Appeals determined by the I AT may relate to cases determined at the IAA made in previous years

[3] Figures supplied by the Presenting Officers Unit. Figures for October-December 1999 are based on data for November-December.

[4] Provisional figures.

Applications for Judicial Review, and outcomes, excluding dependants, 1999 to 2002

Applications for leave to move for judicial review[1]

	Applications	Decisions[2]	Of which granted leave to move	Percentage of applicants granted leave to move[3]
1999[6,7] Q1, Q2 and Q4	1,790	1,125	395	(35)
2000[6]	1,920	2,095	555	(26)
2001[6]	2,210	2,300	290	(13)
2002[6]	3,075	2,980	260	(9)

The outcome of judicial review hearings

	Allowed[6]		Dismissed[7]		Withdrawn	
	Total	As percentage of total determined	Total	As percentage of total determined	Total	As percentage of total determined
1999[4,7] Q1,Q2 and Q4	135	(57)	25	(11)	75	(32)
2000[5]	365	(48)	300	(40)	95	(12)
2001[4]	260	(68)	60	(16)	60	(16)
2002[8]	25	(30)	60	(67)	5	(3)

[1] Figures based on administrative court data. Figures (other than percentages) rounded to the nearest 5
[2] Decisions do not relate to applications in any given period.
[3] The number of which granted leave to move as a percentage of decisions.
[4] Figures exclude judicial reviews brought in cases relating to asylum support (NASS).
[5] Estimated figures.
[6] The decision of the respondent (in this case, the Home Office or the Department for Constitutional Affairs) was quashed. These figures include consent orders where the JR was conceded by the respondent.
[7] The decision of the respondent was upheld.
[8] Provisional figures.

Figures on asylum initial decision and appeals outcomes are published in the annual Home Office statistical bulletin Asylum Statistics United Kingdom, and in the quarterly asylum statistics web pages. Copies are available from the Library of the House and on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many potential immigrants were refused admission to the UK following advice from medical inspectors on a Port Form 104 for each of the last five years at *(a)* Heathrow and *(b)* other United Kingdom ports; and how many other immigrants were refused entry in each of those five years. [156846]

Mr. Browne: Information on the number of people refused leave to enter the UK following advice given on a port form 104 is not collated centrally.

Information on the number of passengers refused entry in each of the last five years is detailed as follows. The table contains data on the total number of passengers (including those removed on medical grounds) refused entry and removed for all ports 1998–02. Information on a particular port of entry is not available except at disproportionate cost.

Below is an extract from information published in the Command Paper "Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom 2002" (Cm6053), obtainable from the House Library, The Stationery Office and via the Home Office website http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/hobpubs1.html

Passenger refused entry at port and subsequently removed[1], 1998 to 2002

United Kingdom

	Total (units)
1998	27,605
1999	31,295
2000	38,275
2001	37,865
2002	50,360

[1] Not necessarily in the same year as arrival.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many passengers were refused entry at port and subsequently removed in each year since 1992, broken down by ports of entry; and to what he attributes the fall between 2002 and 2003 indicated in the rounded figures released on 4 April. [169253]

Mr. Browne: Information on the number of people who were refused leave to enter at port and were subsequently removed in each year from 1992 to 2002 is shown in the table.

Persons refused entry at port and subsequently removed: 1992 to 2002[1,2,3]

Number of persons

	Total
1992	14,950
1993	16,740
1994	17,220
1995	19,150
1996	21,200
1997	24,535
1998	27,605
1999	31,295
2000	38,275
2001	37,865
2002[4]	50,360

[1] Figures up to March 2001 may include a small number of dependants of port asylum applicants.
[2] Not necessarily in the same year as arrival.
[3] Figures are rounded to nearest five.
[4] Provisional figures.

Information on the port of entry of these individuals is not available except by examination of individual case-files at disproportionate cost.

The information released on 6 April was management information. Although no in-depth analysis has yet been conducted on the apparent fall in the numbers of passengers refused and removed, early indications are that the decrease may have been a result of the overall deterrent effect of our strategies, in particular, the imposition of visa regimes for Zimbabwean and Jamaican nationals; Direct Airside Transit Visas; and the expansion of the Airline Liaison Officer network.

Official statistics on the number of people removed from the UK in 2003, including those people who were removed after being refused leave to enter will be available later this year in the Home Office statistical bulletin "Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom 2003" on the Home Office web-site www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

CCTV

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many convictions have arisen from the use of CCTV in *(a)* South Road, Waterloo and *(b)* Crosby in each of the last five years. [177844]

Ms Blears: Information on the number of convictions arising from the use of CCTV surveillance is not recorded. The statistics held centrally on court proceedings do not include information on methods of detection.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action his Department is taking to extend CCTV schemes in the London borough of Wandsworth. [177829]

Ms Blears: The London borough of Wandsworth has received £13,000 from the Building Safer Communities Fund and £10,000 from the Basic Command Unit Fund to support the work of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership initiative on dealing with night time disorder in town centres.

The money will provide extra staff hours for the surveillance of CCTV town centre cameras in disorder hotspots on Friday and Saturday evenings. This initiative has been successful in monitoring the build up of disorder and in directing resources to potential problems.

Correspondence

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letters from the hon. Member for Manchester, Central of *(a)* 27 January regarding Mrs. FAW, reference A1065094, *(b)* 19 January regarding Mrs. KS, reference PO983/4 and S1037919/3, *(c)* 19 January regarding Miss YN, reference PO951/4 and N1064754 and *(d)* 2 February regarding Mr. AKN, reference A1087763. [174364]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 24 May 2004]:* The information is as follows.

(a) A reply to the letter of 27 January was sent by an Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) Senior Director on 4 March. IND wrote to my hon. friend on 21 May to confirm that the necessary action had been taken.

(b) I wrote to my hon. friend on 16 June.

(c) I replied to my hon. friend on 20 May.

(d) IND wrote to my hon. friend on 18 May.

Crime Statistics (London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many drug-related offences were recorded in Greater London in each of the last 10 years; and how many successful prosecutions were brought in each year, broken down by type of drug involved. [177074]

Ms Blears: Information on drug related offences is not collected centrally for recorded crime. The available information relates to recorded drug offences. Information for the Metropolitan Police District is given in the following table.

Table 1: Recorded drug offences in the Metropolitan Police District

	Number of offences
1994[1]	2,574
1995[1]	3,243
1996[1]	3,704
1997[1]	4,695
1997–98[1,2]	4,849
1998–99[3]	32,152
1999–2000	26,233
2000–01	23,626
2001–02	26,204
2002–03[4]	33,311

[1] Relates only to trafficking in controlled drugs.
[2] Financial year data from 1997–98 onwards.
[3] Coverage was expanded to include offences of drug possession and other drug offences.
[4] The number of offences recorded will be influenced by the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard on 1 April 2002.

The number of offenders found guilty of certain drug offences is given in Table 2. These figures are not directly comparable with those for recorded crime.

Table 2: Offenders found guilty of certain drug offences
Number of offenders found guilty[1] of certain drug offences at magistrates courts in Greater London[2] including those found guilty at the Crown court where the committing court was based in Greater London, 1993 to 2002

	1993	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
Possession of:										
Class A drug	1,111	1,406	1,352	1,413	1,503	2,046	2,505	2,355	2,425	2,367
Class B drug	2,680	4,122	3,428	3,391	4,184	5,499	5,218	4,758	4,283	5,844
Class C drug	1	4	1	4	13	11	11	8	5	9
Dealing[3]:										
Class A drug	484	556	718	705	676	924	984	1,021	1,446	1,364
Class B drug	577	786	900	860	923	946	798	530	585	693
Class C drug	6	7	6	11	10	11	4	4	4	6
Other drug offences[4]:										
Class A drug	3	1	6	7	5	8	8	3	4	5
Class B drug	10	14	17	16	30	17	14	6	8	14
Class C drug	2	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.
[2] Covers Metropolitan Police and City of London Police Force Area.

[3] Includes offences of: Unlawful importation and exportation, production of or being concerned in the production of a controlled drug, supplying or offering to supply (or being concerned in supplying or offering to supply) a controlled drug, having possession of a controlled drug with intent to supply.
[4] Includes offences: Permitting premises to be used for unlawful purposes, person has a controlled drug in his possession on a ship, person is knowingly concerned in the carrying or concealing of a controlled drug on a ship.

Dedicated Security Posts Scheme

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much funding has been provided by central Government for the Dedicated Security Posts Scheme in each year since its inception. [177173]

Ms Blears: Grant support for policing generally, including security arrangements common to all police authorities, is allocated using the police grant funding formula. In addition, one particular component of the formula supports additional security costs that vary between police authorities. Provision is allocated between police authorities in line with professional assessment of relative security pressures.

The component for additional security pressures has been included as part of the police funding formula since its inception in 1995–96. It represented 1.8 per cent. of total formula provision in 1998–99, increasing to 2 per cent. from 1999–2000 to 2002–03. Following wider formula changes in 2002, the proportion has been 2.3 per cent. since 2003–04. The provision is an integral part of the overall calculation on which general police grants for each authority are based.

The available figures included in the funding formula for additional security pressures are set out in the table.

	£ million
1998–99	121.4
1999–2000	142.5
2000–01	146.8
2001–02	154.5
2002–03	155.3
2003–04	196.5
2004–05	203.4

Domestic Violence

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what advice he has given in the last 12 months to Crime and Disorder Partnerships on improving good practice in reducing domestic violence. [178814]

Ms Blears: A domestic violence 'mini-site'—has been set up within the Government's Crime Reduction website. This is designed to be an information resource for Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships and local domestic violence coordinators. On this site, we are piloting a 'Web Helpdesk' allowing practitioners to seek information or guidance on any aspect of domestic violence work.

In addition, the Home Office Development and Practice Report 30, "Safety and justice: sharing personal information in the context of domestic violence—an overview", was published at the National Victims Conference on 28 April 2004. The Information Sharing guide and the 'Virtual Helpdesk' can be found in the domestic violence mini-site http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/dv01.htm.

Fixed-penalty Notices

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions a Merseyside local authority officer, community support officer or person accredited by the chief constable has issued a fixed penalty notice for minor graffiti and fly-posting offences since the inception of this power. [178327]

Ms Blears: The power to issue fixed penalty notices for minor graffiti and fly posting under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 was commenced on 31 March this year. To date this power has not been used on Merseyside by anyone from the categories mentioned.

Honours

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much time his Department spent dealing with honours in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by civil service grade. [173041]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office Honours Section provides advice and support to the Home Secretary, Permanent Secretary and Home Office stakeholders on all issues relating to the application of the UK honours system. To this end, it co-ordinates nominations for the new year and birthday honours lists, departmental nominations for the yearly round of royal garden parties and for other ad-hoc events.

The Home Office honours team comprises two full-time staff: one higher executive officer; and one administrative officer.

During the period April 2003 to March 2004 a total of six hours was spent formally discussing honours nominations. These discussions involved three permanent secretaries; three directors (senior civil service) and the honours secretary (higher executive officer).

The majority of the work on honours is undertaken by the departmental honours team. Information is not available on time spent on honours related work by departmental staff who are not members of the Department's honours team.

Leave to Remain

Mr. Dominic Grieve: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many refugees and people granted exceptional leave to remain have been granted settlement since 1979, broken down by nationality. [177034]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 8 June 2004]:* The latest available data relating to the number of refugees and people granted exceptional leave to remain, that have been granted settlement are shown in the table.

To provide data for the entire period requested would incur disproportionate cost.

Historical data on immigration control can be found in the Command Papers "Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom", copies of which are available from the Library of the House.

Grants of settlement, recognised refugees and people granted exceptional leave to remain, by nationality, 1992 to 2002

United Kingdom

Geographical region and nationality	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*[1]	*2001*[1]	*2002*
All nationalities (excluding EEA)	1,780	3,990	3,290	1,600	4,190	4,830	6,680	22,500	25,355	17,965	18,235
Europe											
Bulgaria	0	[4]	[4]	[4]	10	[4]	[4]	50	10	5	5
Cyprus	0	0	0	[4]	[4]	10	[4]	70	65	20	10
Czech Republic	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	[4]	[4]	15	30	25
Estonia	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	[4]	0	[4]	[4]
Hungary	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]	10	[4]	[4]	[4]	5	0	[4]
Latvia	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	[4]	0	5	5
Lithuania	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	[4]	20	15	10	5
Malta	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	[4]	0	[4]	0
Poland	10	20	10	10	10	10	[4]	10	25	30	25
Romania	[4]	10	[4]	[4]	10	[4]	30	40	30	15	15
Russia	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	[4]	30	180	85	35	30
Slovakia	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	[4]	[4]	10	10	10
Switzerland	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	[4]	0
Turkey	[4]	240	410	80	820	1,080	510	1,790	1,485	715	725
Ukraine	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	[4]	20	15	15	10
Other former USSR	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	[4]	30	45	40	55
Former Czechoslovakia	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]	10	[4]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Former USSR	[4]	[4]	10	20	[4]	[4]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Former Yugoslavia	0	0	[4]	0	[4]	20	660	4,970	1,955	2,400	1,260
Of which:											
Croatia	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	40	120	255	310	90
Serbia and Montenegro[2]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	450	4,590	1,175	1,390	710
Slovenia	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	[4]	0	0	0
Other former Yugoslavia[3]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	170	260	525	740	460
Other Europe	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	20	70	45	85	35
Europe	30	280	450	120	890	1,130	1,280	7,240	3,815	3,460	2,230
Americas											
Argentina	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	[4]	[4]	5	[4]
Barbados	0	0	0	0	0	[4]	0	0	0	0	0
Brazil	0	[4]	[4]	0	[4]	[4]	[4]	10	[4]	[4]	[4]
Canada	0	0	0	0	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]	5	5	5
Chile	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]	0	5	5	5
Colombia	[4]	20	20	20	10	10	70	170	190	210	170
Guyana	0	0	[4]	0	0	0	[4]	10	[4]	0	0
Jamaica	0	[4]	0	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]	5	5	10
Mexico	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	[4]	0
Peru	0	[4]	10	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]	30	20	15	5
Trinidad and Tobago	0	0	0	0	0	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]	0
USA	[4]	[4]	0	0	[4]	[4]	[4]	10	20	5	10
Venezuela	0	0	0	0	0	0	[4]	[4]	5	0	[4]
Other Americas	n/a	0	[4]	0	[4]	10	60	50	50	50	30
Americas	[4]	30	40	20	30	40	140	290	310	300	240

n/a = not applicable
[1] Revised data
[2] Former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
[3] Includes Bosnia and Macedonia
[4] 1 or 2
Note:
Data rounded, as such they may not sum to the totals shown.

Grants of settlement, recognised refugees and people granted exceptional leave to remain, by nationality, 1992 to 2002

United Kingdom

Geographical region and nationality	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*[1]	*2001*[1]	*2002*
Africa											
Algeria	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	[3]	10	310	590	240	140	125
Angola	0	0	10	10	10	20	50	230	120	125	250
Congo (Dem. Rep.)[2]	0	0	30	40	30	20	50	1,030	315	390	480
Egypt	n/a	[3]	n/a	n/a	[3]	[3]	[3]	30	35	5	15
Ethiopia	80	390	240	70	40	60	90	1,520	1,915	260	200
Ghana	80	80	60	40	110	50	70	1,290	110	35	55
Kenya	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	20	70	145	85	70
Libya	10	[3]	10	10	10	10	20	40	70	65	70
Mauritius	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	[3]	n/a	10	5	[3]	[3]

Grants of settlement, recognised refugees and people granted exceptional leave to remain, by nationality, 1992 to 2002

United Kingdom

Geographical region and nationality	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*[1]	*2001*[1]	*2002*
Morocco	n/a	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	10	[3]—	5
Nigeria	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	10	[3]—	50	190	105	65	100
Sierra Leone	n/a	n/a	[3]—	n/a	[3]—	[3]—	10	320	135	125	100
Somalia	160	790	720	220	220	290	1,340	1,420	7,015	4,690	5,485
South Africa	20	40	20	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	10	15	10	10
Sudan	10	40	30	[3]—	80	800	140	190	660	190	160
Tanzania	n/a	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	n/a	20	30	35	20	15
Tunisia	[3]—	n/a	[3]—	n/a	[3]—	[3]—	10	30	15	20	5
Uganda	30	80	50	160	490	320	190	720	1,500	210	210
Zambia	n/a	n/a	[3]—	n/a	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	n/a	10	[3]—	10
Zimbabwe	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	10	[3]—	20	45	135	1,875
Other Africa	0	0	50	10	50	30	170	500	595	755	945
Africa	390	1,450	1,280	590	1,080	1,650	2,550	8,230	13,100	7,330	10,185
Asia											
Indian sub-continent											
Bangladesh	n/a	n/a	n/a	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	10	80	25	15	15
India	[3]—	[3]—	10	[3]—	10	50	170	300	205	50	50
Pakistan	[3]—	[3]—	10	10	80	40	120	390	340	270	285
Indian sub-continent	[3]—	10	20	10	100	110	290	770	575	335	350
Middle East											
Iran	190	250	240	230	550	270	200	640	725	655	710
Iraq	80	110	120	50	380	480	630	1,080	1,340	950	1,095
Israel	n/a	[3]—	n/a	n/a	n/a	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	10	[3]—	[3]—
Jordan	n/a	n/a	n/a	[3]—	[3]—	10	[3]—	30	45	5	5
Kuwait	n/a	n/a	n/a	[3]—	n/a	[3]—	10	10	15	5	20
Lebanon	20	60	60	60	230	230	190	340	395	45	110
Saudi Arabia	n/a	[3]—	n/a	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	10	5	n/a
Syria	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	30	40	30	25
Yemen	0	0	[3]—	n/a	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	20	25	35	25
Other Middle East	0	0	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	20	30	40	60	20	35
Middle East	300	420	440	360	1,170	1,020	1,070	2,200	2,660	1,750	2,025

n/a = not applicable

[1] Revised data

[2] The Democratic Republic of the Congo, formerly known as Zaire

[3] 1 or 2

Note:

Data rounded, as such they may not sum to the totals shown.

Grants of settlement, recognised refugees and people granted exceptional leave to remain, by nationality, 1992 to 2002

United Kingdom

Geographical region and nationality	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*[1]	*2001*[1]	*2002*
Remainder of Asia											
China	[2]—	10	30	40	70	150	260	310	110	45	55
Hong Kong	0	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	0	[2]—	[2]—	10	5	[2]—	5
Indonesia	0	0	0	0	[2]—	0	0	0	0	[2]—	0
Japan	0	0	[2]—	0	0	[2]—	0	0	5	5	5
Malaysia	0	[2]—	10	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	10	10	5	[2]—
Philippines	0	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	0	[2]—	10	5	[2]—	5
Singapore	0	n/a	[2]—	0	[2]—	[2]—	0	[2]—	5	[2]—	5
South Korea	0	0	0	0	[2]—	0	0	[2]—	5	[2]—	[2]—
Sri Lanka	230	770	490	170	580	450	800	2,840	3,930	2,285	865
Taiwan	n/a	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	0	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—
Thailand	0	0	0	0	0	0	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	5	[2]—
Other Asia	n/a	n/a	30	30	50	70	100	230	410	2,295	2,205
Remainder of Asia	230	800	570	250	710	680	1,170	3,410	4,490	4,650	3,150
Total Asia	530	1,220	1,030	630	1,980	1,810	2,530	6,390	7,725	6,735	5,520
Oceania											
Australia	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	0	0	[2]—	0	[2]—	10	[2]—	5
New Zealand	0	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	0	0	[2]—	[2]—	5	[2]—	[2]—
Other Oceania	n/a	n/a	0	0	0	0	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	0
Oceania	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	0	[2]—	[2]—	10	15	5	10
British Overseas											
Citizens	[2]—	20	20	[2]—	[2]—	10	20	10	20	10	15
Stateless	790	830	560	240	220	190	160	330	370	125	35
All nationalities (excluding EEA)	1,780	3,990	3,290	1,600	4,190	4,830	6,680	22,500	25,355	17,965	18,235

n/a = not applicable

[1] Revised data

[2] 1 or 2

Note:

Data rounded, as such they may not sum to the totals shown.

Neighbourhood Watch

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on discussions he has held with the National Neighbourhood Watch Association regarding the Neighbourhood Watch logo. [177731]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 9 June 2004]:* Earlier this year the Home Office began receiving complaints from local schemes and one police force that the National Neighbourhood Watch Association (NNWA) had registered the logos as trademarks. This was done without consulting or obtaining agreement from the Police, the Home Office, local authorities or Neighbourhood Watch generally.

The Neighbourhood Watch logos are Crown copyright. We are taking steps to resolve the situation with NNWA and to restore ownership and control of the Neighbourhood Watch trademarks to the Home Office. Our aim is to protect the rights of local and regional schemes to continue to use the logos. Discussions are still under way to resolve the situation.

Police (London)

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average number of Metropolitan police officers per 100,000 of population is within the Greater London area. [177832]

Ms Blears: At the end of December 2003 (the latest date available) the Metropolitan police had 412 police officers to 100,000 of the population. The average for England and Wales is 259 officers to 100,000 population.

Security Industry Authority

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) whether, during the security firm authorisation pilot in Hampshire, security personnel employed by firms from outside Hampshire will be able to work without authorisation; [177232]

(2) what representations he has received about postponing the security firm authorisation pilot in Hampshire; [177233]

(3) how many applications from security companies in Hampshire wishing to participate in the Security Industries Agency have been *(a)* received and *(b)* authorised; and what the average period of time between receipt and authorisation has been; [177234]

(4) what discussions he has had with the Security Industry Authority about the outcome of the pilot project in Hampshire; [177279]

(5) what representations he has received about the preparedness of the Security Industry Authority to license security personnel. [177280]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 9 June 2004]:* On 4 June it became a requirement for any door supervisor working in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, including any employed by a company outside those areas, to possess a licence issued by the Security Industry Authority (SIA).

It was announced on 11 November 2003 that Hampshire and the Isle of Wight would be the initial pilot area for the SIA's licensing arrangements, which are to be rolled out across the whole of England and Wales by April 2005. At the same time, it was made clear that applications in the pilot area could be made from 1 March 2004 and that the legal requirement to hold a licence would come into force from 4 June. The SIA has since undertaken considerable consultation with stakeholders, local authorities and the police, and has carried out a wide-ranging publicity campaign. A small number of representations were received from pub and club owners requesting an extension of the 4 June deadline. We have kept in close touch with the SIA throughout the pilot scheme and have received regular updates on progress, and we concluded that the 4 June deadline should stand.

The responsibility to apply for an SIA licence rests with the individual. As at 4 June, 722 applications had been received from within the pilot area and 193 licences had been granted. The great majority of applications are being processed within the SIA's published target time of four to six weeks.

Some representations have been received about the SIA's state of preparedness, including from a small number of right hon. and hon. Members. The main concerns have related to training requirements and the availability of training providers, the cost and affordability of the SIA licence, and the possibility that inability to meet the 4 June deadline might lead to the closure of businesses and loss of jobs. We have made it clear that all of the necessary procedures and arrangements are in place and that sufficient training capacity has been available for some time.

Special Constables

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which police authorities have applied for approval to introduce an allowance for special constables under the Special Constables (Amendment) Regulations 2002; and which ones he has *(a)* approved and *(b)* refused. [178786]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 14 June 2004]:* Allowance schemes for special constables have been approved in Cumbria (Workington), West Midlands (H2 Operational Command Unit), Humberside (force wide) and Thames Valley (Thames Forest area). No applications have been refused.

Spray Paint Sales

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions a person has received a level 4 fine for selling spray paints to someone under the age of 16 years on Merseyside since the inception of this power. [178329]

Ms Blears: No fines for this offence have been handed down by Merseyside courts yet. We are in discussion with relevant stakeholders as to what further measures might be necessary to ensure the effective enforcement of these provisions.

Stowaways

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many stowaways were detected at border controls in mainland Europe in *(a)* vehicles and *(b)* cargo bound for the UK in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [160374]

Mr. Browne: The Government does not hold figures on the number of clandestines or stowaways detected at border controls in mainland Europe en route to the UK.

We do work closely with EU member states, Accession States, the "Near Neighbours" and countries in wider Europe on a wide range of migration issues, including measures aimed at strengthening borders within Europe.

Although we do not hold figures on the number of clandestines or stowaways detected at border controls in mainland Europe en route to the UK locally collated management information indicates that; enhanced juxtaposed controls, deployment of new detection technology and close co-operation with our EU counterparts, port authorities and carriers prevented more than 9,000 people crossing the channel illegally from Calais and Coquelles to the United Kingdom during 2003.

UK Settlement

Mr. Grieve: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many passengers were given leave to enter the United Kingdom in each year since 1979 *(a)* as visitors, *(b)* as people returning after a temporary absence abroad, *(c)* as passengers in transit, *(d)* as students, *(e)* as work permit holders and their dependants, *(f)* as working holidaymakers, *(g)* as a spouse or fiancée, *(h)* as au pairs, *(i)* on the basis of UK ancestry, *(j)* on the basis of acceptance for settlement on arrival, *(k)* for other reasons and *(l)* in total. [177033]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 8 June 2004]:* The latest available data relating to the number of passengers admitted to the United Kingdom by the requested categories are given in the table. The data relate to the number of journeys made.

To provide data for the entire period would incur disproportionate cost.

Detailed statistics on immigration control are published in the Command Paper "Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom" obtainable from the Library of the House, and from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/commandpubs1.html. The latest edition is that for 2002 (Cm6053).

Passengers given leave to enter the United Kingdom by purpose of journey, excluding EEA nationals, 1993 to 2003

United Kingdom — *Number of journeys*

	Passengers admitted by purpose of journey			
	Total admitted	*Visitors*	*Students*	*Au pairs*
1993	9,840,000	7,080,000	238,000	12,700
1994	9,180,000	6,570,000	249,000	9,400
1995	9,620,000	6,800,000	285,000	11,700
1996	10,300,000	7,350,000	298,000	13,400
1997	10,900,000	7,760,000	278,000	15,300
1998	11,500,000	8,040,000	266,000	15,900
1999	12,000,000	8,370,000	272,000	14,600

Passengers given leave to enter the United Kingdom by purpose of journey, excluding EEA nationals, 1993 to 2003

United Kingdom — *Number of journeys*

	Passengers admitted by purpose of journey			
	Total admitted	*Visitors*	*Students*	*Au pairs*
2000	13,000,000	8,930,000	313,000	12,900
2001	12,800,000	8,170,000	339,000	12,000
2002	12,600,000	7,850,000	369,000	12,800
2003[1]	12,200,000	7,580,000	319,000	15,300

	Passengers admitted by purpose of journey			
	Work permit holders and their dependants	*Working holiday-makers*	*Admitted as a spouse or fiancé(e)*	*Passengers in transit*
1993	48,000	21,600	19,200	936,000
1994	47,500	31,600	18,800	852,000
1995	52,100	36,000	19,100	948,000
1996	58,200	33,000	20,900	1,000,000
1997	63,000	33,300	26,400	1,090,000
1998	68,400	40,800	32,200	1,150,000
1999	76,200	45,800	30,300	1,170,000
2000	92,000	38,400	33,000	1,270,000
2001	109,000	35,800	29,100	1,310,000
2002	120,000	41,700	30,300	1,300,000
2003[1]	119,000	46,500	31,400	1,140,000

	Passengers admitted by purpose of journey			
	Passengers returning after a temporary absence abroad	*UK ancestry*	*Others given leave to enter[2]*	*Granted settlement on arrival[3]*
1993	1,380,000	4,080	94,300	3,620
1994	1,300,000	5,170	88,200	2,610
1995	1,370,000	6,620	90,400	2,400
1996	1,470,000	7,420	94,500	2,120
1997	1,560,000	8,370	103,000	2,350
1998	1,780,000	10,200	104,000	2,900
1999	1,910,000	11,800	110,000	2,530
2000	2,200,000	10,900	112,000	2,290
2001	2,620,000	10,700	149,000	2,820
2002	2,740,000	10,400	127,000	2,470
2003[1]	2,800,000	9,150	178,000	2,600

[1] Provisional and subject to change.
[2] Includes refugees, exceptional leave cases and their dependants, excluding such persons given temporary admission.
[3] Excludes asylum-related cases given indefinite leave to enter; these are included in 'Others given leave to enter'.
Note:
Data rounded to three significant places, as such they may not sum to the totals shown.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Animal By-products

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the requirements upon retailers are for the intermediate handling and disposal of category 1 and category 3 animal by-products. [177398]

Mr. Bradshaw: We would not expect retailers to produce category 1 animal by-products such are specified risk material. Full requirements for handling and disposal of all animal by-products are set out in Regulation (EC) No 1774/2002.

The Regulation also sets out the standards that intermediate plants and processing or disposal operations must comply with and applies controls to the transport of animal by-products. These are listed in Annex III of the Regulation.

Among the requirements for a category 3 intermediate plant, it must have its own entrance, exit, should be capable of being washed and disinfected, and should have its own dedicated staff. It also lists the hygiene considerations to prevent cross-contamination with food intended for human consumption.

A guidance note on the requirements has been provided to the food industry which is available at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/by-prods/FormerFoodstuffs/guidance_dispffs.pdf.

Bovine TB

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) in what circumstances shooting carried out under licence or other authority is a permitted means of killing badgers; [158500]

(2) pursuant to the Answer of 28 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 381W, on badgers, what methods other than shooting are available for the culling of badgers. [159154]

Mr. Bradshaw: Where killing is carried out under a licence issued by Defra, the techniqueemployed will depend on the particular circumstances of the individual case, but will normally involve cage trapping and humane dispatch by shooting.

All wild animals are protected by Section 11(1) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, against the use of self locking snares, bows, crossbows, or any explosive other than ammunition for a firearm for the purpose of killing or taking.

Schedule 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 details a list of species, including badgers, which are protected from further methods of killing or taking. Prohibited methods are detailed in Section 11(2) of the 1981 Act, and are any trap, net or snare, electrical devices, poisons, stupefying bait, automatic or semi-automatic weapon, any illuminating or sighting device for night shooting, any dazzling device, any gas or smoke, decoys, sound recording or, in immediate pursuit, mechanically propelled vehicles.

It is an offence if any person uses a prohibited method against a Schedule 6 species without obtaining a licence from Defra. On conviction the maximum summary fine and sentence is a £5,000 fine and/or six-month custodial sentence.

Section 2(1) of the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 makes it an offence to use in the course of killing or taking a badger any badger tongs or any firearms other than a smooth-bore weapon of not less than 20 bore or a rifle using ammunition having a muzzle energy of not less than 160 foot-pounds and a bullet weighing not less than 38 grains, or cruelly ill-treat any badger.

The latter would make it an offence to mis-use a permitted or authorised method of killing or taking a badger, in a way which would be cruel to the badger concerned.

It is also an offence, except as permitted by the 1992 Act, to dig for a badger.

Further details of the provisions of the Protection of badgers act can be found in my previous response to the hon. Member's earlier question answered on 20 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 1187W.

On conviction, a person guilty of committing an offence under the 1992 Act is liable to a maximum summary fine of £5,000 fine and/or a six-month custodial sentence.

Cement and Lime Kilns

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the *(a)* start and *(b)* end dates are for the consultation by the Environment Agency on proposals to revise the Substitute Fuels Protocol for use on cement and lime kilns. [178291]

Alun Michael: The Environment Agency's consultation on proposals to revise the Substitute Fuels Protocol started on 26 March 2004 and closes on 18 June 2004.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list those who have been sent the document in relation to the consultation to revise the Substitute Fuels Protocol for use on cement and lime kilns. [178292]

Alun Michael: The Environment Agency has made its consultation document on proposals to revise the Substitute Fuels Protocol available publicly on its website at www.environment-agency.gov.uk/yourenv/consultations/current_consultations. In addition copies have been sent to the following organisations and individuals.

Government Departments/Organisations

Countryside Council for Wales
Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs
Department of Health
Department of Trade and Industry
English Nature
Environment and Heritage Service—Northern Ireland
Food Standards Agency
Health Protection Agency
National Assembly for Wales
National Public Health Service, Wales
Rural Payments Agency
Scottish Environmental Protection Agency

Local Government Organisations

Flintshire County Council
High Peak Borough Council
High Peak District Council
Kennet District Council
Langar cum Barnstone Parish Council
Medway District Council
Medway County Council

North Lincolnshire Council
North Wiltshire District Council
Ribble Valley Borough Council
Rugby Borough Council
Sedgefield District Council
South Cams District Council
South Kesteven District Council
Staffs Moorlands District Council
Staffordshire County Council
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Vale of Glamorgan Council
West Wiltshire District Council

Other Organisations

BIFFA Waste Services Ltd.
Business Council for Sustainable Development UK
British Cement Association
British Lime Association
Castle Cement—Ribblesdale
Cembureau
Cleanaway Ltd.
Chemical Recovery Association
Countryside Commission
Council Protection Rural England—Northern Lincolnshire
Environmental Services Association
The Environmental Forum
Flintshire Green Party and Phoenix Coalition
Flintshire Local Health Board
Friends of the Earth
Friends of the Earth Cymru
Greenetwork
Green Audit
High Peak and Dales Primary Care Trust
Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Primary Care Trust
Kent Local Health Protection Unit
Lafarge—Cauldron Cement Works
Lafarge—Holborough Cement Works
LCC Energy
Melton, Rutland and Harborough Primary Care Trust
North Derbyshire Health Authority
North Eastern Sea Fisheries Committee
Northumbrian Water Ltd.
Oil Recycling Association
Onyx (UK) Ltd.
Peak District National Park Authority
PDM Group
Rugby in Plume
Rugby Primary Care Trust
Sapphire Energy Recovery
Shanks Group plc
Shropshire & Staffs Health Protection Team
Solvent Resource Management Ltd.
SITA
Together Creating Communities/Trefnu Cymunedol Cymru
The United Kingdom Renderers Association
United Utilities
Vale Local Health Board
Women's Environmental Network
Wyvern Waste Services

Individuals

Rt Hon M. Ancram QC
Norman Baker, MP
J. Behrenroth
Mr. G. Brewer
Chris Davies—MEP
Mr. D. Darlington
Mr. S. Eades
Mrs. Lynda England
Cllr R. Hampson
Edward Hatala
Dr. Vyvyan Howard
Cllr Jones
Mr. D. Levy
Dr. D. H. Lohmann
Mr. A. Mack
Dr. A. Murrison MP
Mrs. L. Pallikaropoulos
Mr. J. Smith MP
Dr. Andrew Tubb
Mr. & Mrs. D. M. Waller
Dr. G. W. Waterhouse
Cllr G. Williams
Cllr A. Woolley

British Waterways Board

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the British Waterways Board acquired a shareholding in Easynet plc; for what reasons; and what the size of the shareholding is. [178870]

Alun Michael: Prior to 2000, British Waterways and GEC, each invested £147,000 into a joint venture (Fibreway), which laid fibre optic cables under many of British Waterways' towpaths and sold capacity to telecoms operators. In May 2000, GEC decided to concentrate its future activity on telecoms business, under the Marconi name and wanted to invest £200–300 million in expanding Fibreway. Fibreway was therefore restructured, and British Waterways received an annual payment and a 10 per cent. equity share in the new Fibreway business ipsaris.

In June 2001 ipsaris effectively split its business into two components. The mast site business was transferred to Ultramast and the fibre optic business was listed by way of a reverse takeover of Easynet. Marconi sold 92 per cent. of its share in ipsaris to Easynet in return for 77.5 million shares in the enlarged group. The deal meant that British Waterways received a 2.6 per cent. share of Easynet and a stake in the Ultramast business.

The fibre optic business has continued successfully as part of the Easynet portfolio and British Waterways Board now owns approximately 2 million shares in the business (1.8 per cent.). This is valued at around £2.1 million today, compared with the initial outlay of £147,500. Easynet also continues to pay an annual sum to British Waterways for the use of the wayleave.

EU Emissions Trading Scheme

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs why she has set stricter carbon dioxide reduction targets for the EU Emissions Trading Scheme than other member states. [178488]

Mr. Morley: The UK has not set stricter carbon reduction targets for the EU Emissions Trading Scheme than other member states. Most of the plans submitted to the Commission from other member states require greater emissions cuts from their industries than in the UK.

The UK is a leader in tackling climate change and has already reduced emissions of greenhouse gases to below its target under the Kyoto Protocol. However, many other member states have some way to meet their Kyoto obligations. The UK is pressing the Commission to ensure that a robust analysis of plans is carried out, and that member states are encouraged to use the EU Emissions Trading Scheme to help them meet their Kyoto targets.

GM Crops

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what statistically valid and peer-reviewed studies her Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the safety of feeding Chardon LL fodder maize to ruminants. [178119]

Mr. Morley: No studies on the safety of feeding Chardon LL, a variety of maize containing the GM event known as T25, to ruminants have been commissioned by Defra, nor has the Department evaluated any such studies. T25 maize was assessed and approved for use as any other maize by member states under Part C of directive 90/220 in 1998. Both the Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment and the Advisory Committee on Animal Feeding stuffs were satisfied, on the basis of the data submitted, that the T25 maize grain and its products pose no more risk as animal feed than non-GM maize varieties.

I understand that Bayer CropScience commissioned a study which examined the effect of feeding Chardon LL forage maize to dairy cattle and that the results are being considered for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. The results will be passed to ACRE and ACAF in due course.

Orchards

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the rotational period is of *(a)* traditional English apple orchards and *(b)* modern commercial apple orchards. [177783]

Alun Michael: A grower's decision on when to replace an orchard will depend on many factors. Traditional orchards are typically aged 30 years or more but most commercial orchards are replaced after about 15 years as their productivity declines.

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement about the *(a)* apple growing and *(b)* cider industry under the mid-term review of the Common Agricultural Policy. [177788]

Alun Michael: Many of the apples supplied to the cider industry are delivered under contract from orchards which have been planted for the purpose. We understand that a number of existing contracts are due to expire in the next two or three years and are unlikely to be renewed. Some top fruit growers who do not expect to have a market for their produce may choose to grub up their orchards to qualify for the new Single Payment, rather than retain them to the end of their productive life. This is a commercial decision for the growers concerned.

Radioactive Waste

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects to publish her Department's annual report on progress made in implementing the programme set out in the White Paper on managing radioactive waste safely. [178724]

Mr. Morley: A copy of the 2003 Managing Radioactive Waste Safety progress report to the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee is available under the Environment heading of the Committee's website (www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/environment food and rural_affairs.cfm). Additionally, CoRWM is required to submit quarterly reports of its work under Managing Radioactive Waste Safely programme to its sponsoring Ministers. The first report for November 2003 to February 2004 is available on CoRWM's website (www.corwm.org.uk). The second report for March 2004 to May 2004 should be available shortly.

River Stour

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she plans to take to maintain the quality of water in the River Stour as the population of Ashford grows; and if she will make a statement. [177996]

Mr. Morley: The Government are funding a series of studies intended to facilitate the sustainable development of Ashford, to meet a stated target of providing 31,000 new homes in the town by 2031.

The Integrated Water Management Study, which is being led by the Environment Agency, is looking into issues related to the water environment in this context. The first phase of the study identified a number of water-related constraints to growth, and potential strategies to overcome them will be identified in the final phase of the study. The final report will be available by the end of 2005.

The Agency's longer-term strategy for protecting the Great Stour will be guided by the results of the Integrated Water Management Study. Such a strategy may require, for example, more advanced wastewater treatment, new treatment and disposal locations.

Soil Action Plan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on support available to help the introduction of the recently announced Soil Action Plan for England. [178201]

Alun Michael: Within Defra the Soil Action Plan currently has the dedicated support of a team of six staff (up from three a year ago and expected to expand a little further), and a research budget of £1.4 million, plus a further £9.7 million which it is estimated is spent on soil related research. The action plan is also supported by other colleagues in the department, and by a coalition of partners across and beyond Government, among whom English Heritage, English Nature and the Environment Agency have taken responsibility for leading particular workstreams.

Warm Front Scheme

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what plans she has to expand the Warm Front grant scheme; and if she will make a statement; [178671]

(2) what plans she has to provide resources for a wider range of energy efficiency measures under the Warm Front scheme; and if she will make a statement; [178672]

(3) if she will make a statement on the progress made by the Warm Front scheme towards meeting the targets set out in the Government's Fuel Poverty Strategy. [178673]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 14 June 2004]:* We intend to publish a Fuel Poverty Implementation Plan later this summer which will include details about the future development of the Warm Front scheme and consider different options for improving its targeting and measures offered. This will also set out the action and resources needed to achieve our fuel poverty targets.

The PSA target of assisting 600,000 households between 2001–04 has been met, with over 660,000 households assisted in that period. In total, Warm Front delivered measures to over 800,000 households since the start of the scheme in June 2000 and March 2004.

Whaling

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the Icelandic Government regarding its recent decision to re-start the hunting of minke whales. [177963]

Mr. Bradshaw: The UK strongly supports the International Whaling Commission (IWC) moratorium on commercial whaling and deeply regrets the decision of Iceland to continue 'scientific' whaling this year. Following last years UK-led demarche of 23 countries criticising Iceland's return to whaling, I will be contacting the Icelandic Government again urging them to reconsider their unnecessary and unjustified decision.

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what information the UK will submit to the International Whaling Commission meeting in Sorrento in connection with *(a)* the Southern Ocean Sanctuary review and *(b)* the Conservation Committee. [178677]

Mr. Bradshaw: The head of the UK's delegation to the International Whaling Commission (IWC) Scientific Committee has been actively involved in the Southern Ocean Sanctuary review process, and will submit scientific evidence to support the continuation of the Southern Ocean Sanctuary at the IWC meeting in Sorrento.

The UK was instrumental in establishing the Conservation Committee at last years IWC meeting in Berlin and we are keen to see it succeed. At this stage an agenda has yet to be agreed, but the UK will play an active part in the Committee and will provide information as and when required.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Belfast Inner-city Ring Road

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has for the inner-city ring road in Belfast. [162699]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of the Roads Service has written to the hon. Gentleman. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library.

Circuit of Ireland Rally

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the Government intends to provide financial assistance for the Circuit of Ireland Rally. [178537]

Angela Smith: It is too soon to say if funding will be made available for the 2005 Circuit of Ireland Rally. Neither the Northern Ireland Events Company (NIEC) nor the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) have received an application for the 2005 Rally but should such applications be made these would be considered in the normal way. In 2003 the total amount provided from the NIEC and NITB was £76,500 and in 2004 the NIEC provided £38,250.

Columba Initiative

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what *(a)* annual and *(b)* other reports have been published in respect of the Columba initiative. [176889]

Angela Smith: The Columba initiative registered as a company limited by guarantee in April 2002. We expect its first Annual Report (including accounts) to be published imminently. This report will cover the period up to 2003. The Annual Report and Accounts will be placed in the Library once we have received them.

Cultural Venues

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much public money in capital terms has been allocated for cultural venues *(a)* in Belfast and *(b)* outside Belfast in each of the last five years. [178549]

Angela Smith: Capital grants to cultural venues (defined as arts venues, registered museums and public libraries) were as follows in each of the last five years:

£

Financial year	Belfast	Outside Belfast
1999–2000	404,500	1,460,597
2000–01	200,100	2,262,766
2001–02	573,100	1,329,340
2002–03	1,854,000	2,905,889
2003–04	470,002	3,478,720

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much money has been allocated for cultural venues in Belfast in the current financial year, broken down by venue. [178551]

Angela Smith: A total of £14,003,400 has been allocated for cultural venues (defined as arts venues, registered museums and public libraries) in Belfast in the current financial year, broken down as follows:

Arts Council of Northern Ireland

Venue	Allocation (£)
Belfast Exposed Photography	30,000
Crescent Arts Centre	120,000
Culturlann McAdam O Fiaich	140,000
Fendersky Gallery	5,000
Golden Thread Gallery	15,000
Grand Opera House	458,400
Lyric Players' Theatre	535,000
Old Museum Arts Centre	205,000
Ormeau Baths Gallery	250,000
Total	1,758,400

National Museums and Galleries of Northern Ireland

Venue	Allocation (£)
Ulster Museum	6,153,500
Total	6,153,000

£6,092,000 has been allocated to the Belfast Education and Library Board for the public library service. It is not possible to give a breakdown of this allocation by venue.

Demilitarisation

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the demilitarisation measures that have been taken in the past year. [178683]

Mr. Pearson: The information requested is as follows:

Cloghoge Tower, South Armagh (R14)—demolished

Tievecrum Tower, South Armagh (R23)—demolished

Ebrington Army Base, Londonderry—closed

Clooney Army Base, Londonderry—closed

Troops withdrawn from PSNI Stations—Aughnacloy, County Armagh, Belleek and Belcoo, County Fermanagh

Emergency Planning

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on emergency planning arrangements in the event of an attack linked to international terrorism. [179117]

Mr. Pearson: The Government are committed to the fight against terrorism, whatever its origin. Since the terrorist attacks in the USA on 11 September 2001, the Government and their partners have been completely overhauling arrangements to protect the UK, working both to help prevent terrorist attacks wherever possible, and to minimise the impact of an attack. Northern Ireland is fully involved in that programme where appropriate.

HMS Caroline

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the costs involved in retaining HMS Caroline in Belfast as a visitor attraction at the Museum of Sky and Sea. [178698]

Angela Smith: My hon. Friend the Minister for Veterans (Mr. Caplin), confirmed in a written answer to the hon. Lady on 15 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 810W, that the Ministry of Defence has no plans at this time to decommission HMS Caroline. This being the case, there has been no consideration given to including the ship within any plans for a Museum of Sea and Sky and no assessment has been made of costs which may be involved.

Ice Hockey

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what funding has been allocated to promote the development of ice hockey in Northern Ireland in each of the past five years. [178527]

Angela Smith: The amount awarded by the Sports Council for Northern Ireland to promote the development of ice hockey in each of the past five years is as follows.

	£
1999–2000	[1]0
2000–01	3,000
2001–02	3,000
2002–03	1,150
2003–04	[1]0

[1] No applications were received in 1999–2000 and 2003–04.

In addition the Northern Ireland Events Company (NIEC) provided £7,000 towards the hosting the final of the Super league Challenge Cup in 2001.

Irish Republican Army

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people have been *(a)* arrested and *(b)* charged for being members of the IRA since the signing of the Belfast Agreement; and if he will make a statement. [159641]

Mr. Pearson: The police do not record information on arrests centrally and to provide this information would incur a disproportionate cost. During the period 11 April 1998 to 29 February 2004 12 persons were charged with membership of the IRA.

Lyric Theatre

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of the estimated cost of the redevelopment of the Lyric Theatre in Belfast will be met from Government funding. [178701]

Angela Smith: No decision has yet been taken on whether the Government will provide financial assistance for the redevelopment of the Lyric Theatre. This will depend on the strength of the business case and the availability of funding to meet the capital costs. My Department is currently working with the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and The Lyric Theatre to develop a robust and up-to-date business case for support from public sector funds.

Motorsports

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what resources are made available from *(a)* the Safety at Sports Grounds Fund and *(b)* other public funding sources for organisers to carry out essential safety improvements and maintenance for each motorcycle racing event in Northern Ireland. [178555]

Angela Smith: No funding from the Sports Council Safe Sports Grounds fund has been made available for organisers to carry out essential safety improvements and maintenance for each motorcycle racing event in Northern Ireland. Approximately £175,000 has previously been provided by my Department via the Sports Council for Northern Ireland for essential safety work at motorcycle road racing circuits. Moreover, organisers may be able to avail of public funding for essential safety improvements and maintenance for motorcycle racing events from monies provided by the Sports Council to the 2 & 4 Wheel Motor Sport Steering Group Ltd., the umbrella group of motor sports governing bodies and which also represents organisers of motorcycle racing events in Northern Ireland.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what proposals his Department has for taking forward the development of a motorsports facility for Northern Ireland which meets international standards. [178699]

Angela Smith: My Department currently has no proposals for taking forward the development of a motorsports facility for Northern Ireland which meets international standards. However, as part of their strategic plan, the governing bodies of motorsport in Northern Ireland, as represented by the two and four Wheel Motorsport Steering Group Ltd., have initiated an 'Expressions of Interest' exercise in relation to the development of such a facility. The outcome of this exercise is expected to be announced by the two and four Wheel Motorsport Steering Group Ltd. on the week commencing 21 June.

Patrick Kelly

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many police officers are involved in the investigation of the murder of Mr. Patrick Kelly, at Trillick, Co. Tyrone, on 10 August 1974. [178385]

Mr. Pearson: The deployment of resources is a matter for the Chief Constable. Police have confirmed that the investigation into the murder of Mr. Kelly requires substantial resourcing. The actual number of officers deployed at any given time varies according to the most efficient use of resources within the Crime Operations Department.

Personal Injury Claims

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* Government Departments and agencies paid in claims for personal injury or liability, as a proportion of their total budgets, in each of the last five years. [168199]

Mr. Pearson: Claims paid for personal injury in respect of employers liability and public liability, by the 11 Departments of the Northern Ireland Administration and the Northern Ireland Office, including agencies, has been less than 1 per cent. of total budgets in each of the last five years.

Information relating to personal injury claims paid by district councils is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Salmon

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the stocking plan is for salmon in the rivers *(a)* Bush, *(b)* Bann and *(c)* Lagan for the current year; and what the plans were in each of the last five years. [178619]

Angela Smith: Salmon fry hatched at Bushmills Salmon Station early in 2004 have already been stocked into suitable habitat in the River Bush catchment. Summerling parr will be stocked into under recruited nursery habitat in the autumn. Fry stocking has been a part of both the Department's scientific research programme and angling development programme on the River Bush in each of the last five years. It has been increased in recent years to bolster declining natural egg deposition.

Tributaries of the Lower River Bann including the Clady and the Agivey are routinely stocked with indigenous juvenile salmon by local angling clubs. This has occurred in each of the last 5 years.

Salmon fry hatched at Bushmills Salmon Station have been stocked into suitable habitat on the River Lagan in 2004. The reintroduction of salmon to the River Lagan commenced in 1991 with a programme of fry stocking and this has continued annually since then.

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made towards the re-establishment of the Lough Erne salmon run; and what plans are in place to deal with the physical barrier of the Ballyshannon generator in order that the Lough Erne salmon run can be re-established. [178620]

Angela Smith: A cross-border scientific programme was set up in 1995 to address the problem of low salmon runs in the Erne catchment. The programme elucidated some of the reasons behind the absence of a wild breeding salmon population and began a restoration programme that saw increasing numbers of salmon

ascending the River Erne from 1998. A number of conclusions and recommendations were reported in 2001 and an action plan was developed.

While many aspects of the action plan have been implemented, discussions continue with the authorities in the Republic of Ireland on the outstanding recommendations.

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the estimated count was for the salmon run in the rivers *(a)* Bush, *(b)* Bann and *(c)* Lagan in each of the last five years. [178623]

Angela Smith: Total counts are available for the River Bush. A counter on the Lower River Bann at Portna provides an indicative count only of adult fish ascending the river, as salmon enter tributaries downstream. The number of salmon ascending the River Lagan is estimated using a trapping/electronic counting facility, and more recently video, deployed at Stranmillis weir.

Counts for each of the last five years are as follows:

	Bush[1]	*Bann (Portna)*	*Lagan*
2003	723	[2]3,012	100
2002	835	4,502	500
2001	913	4,572	450
2000	950	4,407	800
1999	977	2,371	50

[1] Wild fish (excludes adults released as smolts from the hatchery).
[2] Count incomplete due to technical problems with electronic counter.

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what his assessment is of the existing threats to salmon runs in the rivers *(a)* Bush, *(b)* Bann and *(c)* Lagan; and what steps are being taken by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to counter these threats. [178624]

Angela Smith: Policy on salmon and inland fisheries is the responsibility of the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure. Accordingly, the hon. Member's question has been referred to my Department for answer.

The existing threats to salmon stocks on each of the Rivers Bush, Bann and Lagan are similar, at least at the macro scale.

Research at Bushmills salmon station has demonstrated a significant decline in marine survival in recent years whereby a substantially lower percentage of emigrating smolts are returning as adults to home waters. International research into the causes of this worrying phenomenon is being commissioned and will look at factors such as climatic change, predation and pressure on prey species. The Department has been successful in buying-out over 87 per cent. of coastal nets that exploited fish returning to the Bush and Bann rivers and has approved a range of byelaws made by the Fisheries Conservancy Board that seek to further control both commercial and angling exploitation.

Water quality and habitat degradation are the main causes of poor freshwater production of smolts. Secondary concerns include periodic obstructions to passage and predation by cormorants and seals.

A research project on the River Bush sponsored by Departments has recently reported on factors affecting water quality and flows that impact on aquatic ecology.

It is planned to take the recommendations forward by way of a catchment management action plan. Proposals aimed at restoring productive freshwater habitat for salmon in the river have been prepared as part of this process.

Ulster Canal

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made with regard to the establishment of the Ulster Canal. [178621]

Angela Smith: The updated Economic Appraisal on re-opening the Ulster Canal in its entirety is currently with both Governments for consideration. As re-opening is not viable in purely monetary terms, it will be difficult to secure Government funding for this significant capital project. I welcome the supporting efforts of organisations such as the Inland Waterways Association of Ireland whose application for INTERREG IH(A) funding to re-open a south-western section of the Ulster Canal is proceeding through the assessment system.

HEALTH

Food Research

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much the Government spent on research and development relating to food, with particular reference to *(a)* agriculture, *(b)* fishing, *(c)* processing, *(d)* nutrition, *(e)* safety and *(f)* economic and social studies, in each of the most recent 10 years for which figures are available, broken down by (i) Government departments, (ii) research councils, (iii) higher education, (iv) business enterprises and (v) private non-profit organisations. [179026]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not held centrally.

The figures available for Food Standards Agency expenditure on research and development related to food safety and nutrition in the four financial years since it came into being are shown in the table.

£ million

Financial year	*Food safety*	*Nutrition*
2000–01	15.7	6.3
2001–02	15.4	3.8
2002–03	15.2	3.9
2003–04[1]	15.7	4.8

Note:
[1] Figures for 2003–04 are provisional

Acupuncture

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether general practitioners who are members of the British Medical Acupuncture Society will be subject to dual registration when the new statutory regulator is in place; whether medical acupuncturists

will be recognised in the education and training requirements of the new acupuncture regulator; and if he will make a statement. [178454]

Miss Melanie Johnson: On 2 March, the Department published proposals for the statutory regulation of herbal medicine and acupuncture practitioners. The consultation period closed on 7 June. We are aware of the interests of medical acupuncturists and will consider their representations very carefully.

Alzheimer's

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people suffer from Alzheimer's in *(a)* the North West, *(b)* Lancashire and *(c)* Chorley; and what help and support is given to Alzheimer's (i) patients and (ii) carers in (A) Lancashire Teaching Hospital and (B) Chorley South Ribble Primary Care Trust. [177152]

Dr. Ladyman: Information on the numbers of people suffering from Alzheimer's disease on a regional basis is not held centrally.

Dementia services across Lancashire Teaching Hospitals national health service trust is provided by the Lancashire Care Trust, which provides the following services:

consultant psychiatrist led outpatient clinics, with a memory assessment service, including the prescribing and monitoring of anti dementia drug therapy;

nine in patient assessment beds on Hazelwood Ward, Chorley and South Ribble hospital;

day hospital service at the Chorley and South Ribble hospital, where there are 25 places available for two days per week, including memory support;

28 continuing care beds at Meadowbank Nursing Home;

psychology services; and

community mental health teams which are staffed by five community psychiatric nurses and four support workers. These include dementia services within their workload.

Within the Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care Trust (PCT), the following help and support is available:

10 intermediate care rehabilitation beds at Charnley Fold, Bamber Bridge for people with dementia, provided jointly by Chorley and South Ribble PCT, Preston PCT and Lancashire county council social services. This service opened in April 2004. Following completion of refurbishment this service will move to Broadfield, Leyland.

Chorley and South Ribble PCT funds a service by Crossroads, which was introduced in 2003 and based in the Beechurst Unit at Chorley district hospital, for people with early onset dementia and their carers.

Anti-depressant Drugs

Dr. Naysmith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many prescription items of *(a)* individual benzodiazepine drugs and *(b)* individual antidepressants were dispensed in the community in England in 2003. [171679]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the numbers of prescription items of benzodiazepines and anti-depressants that were dispensed in the community in England in 2003 has been placed in the Library.

Clinical Trials

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he is taking to increase the participation of surgeons in clinical trials. [176866]

Mr. Hutton: The Medical Research Council (MRC) has reviewed the conduct of trials of surgical interventions and has published guidance to surgeons and triallists on the subject. The guidance can be found on the MRC website at www.mrc.ac.uk/pdf-health_tech_assess.pdf

In order to encourage more surgeons to enter research training, the MRC runs a joint fellowship scheme with the royal colleges of surgeons of England and Edinburgh and of obstetrics and gynaecology. Details are at www.mrc.ac.uk/doc-crtf2notes.doc

Depression (Under-18s)

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research his Department has commissioned into the causes of depression in those aged under 18. [178940]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 15 June 2004]:* There is wide ranging research being undertaken on depression among the under 18 age group, including research on the causes of depression. Examples of this work include the study by Professor Jean Golding at Bristol University on conduct disorder and depression in early adolescence and the work of Professor Ian Goodyear, Lifespan Health National Health Service Trust, with his longitudinal family study in childhood depression and his investigation into the aetiology and outcome of a first major depression in childhood and adolescence.

Foundation Trusts

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what audit and performance evaluation of first wave foundation trusts and their impact on local health services, including neighbouring trusts, will be conducted before *(a)* foundation status is reaffirmed and *(b)* the rolling out of further foundation trusts. [179116]

Mr. Hutton: An independent review of national health service foundation trusts (NHSFTs) is to be undertaken by the Healthcare Commission. The terms of reference for the review are currently being developed.

We expect to make an announcement about the timing of the review and its terms of reference and about the timing of the next wave of NHSFT authorisations, wave 2, shortly.

Genito-urinary Care

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting times were in genito-urinary medicine clinics for patients referred by general practitioners in the latest period for which figures are available. [179155]

Mr. Hutton: In England, at the end of March 2004, the average estimated provider based waiting time following a general practitioner referral for a first outpatient appointment in specialty genito-urinary medicine is 2.02 weeks.

Hospital Capacity

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the capacity of *(a)* the Worcestershire Royal Hospital and *(b)* the Alexandra Hospital, Redditch to respond to an increase in demand for in-patient treatment. [178439]

Dr. Ladyman: This is a matter for the local health community. West Midlands South Strategic Health Authority reports that capacity at both hospitals is regularly reviewed.

Learning Disabilities

Mrs. Browning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he intends to publish the guide to good services commissioned by the National Institute for Mental Health in England to address the mental health needs of people with learning disabilities. [178958]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 15 June 2004]:* The National Institute for Mental Health in England and the "Valuing People" support team expect to jointly publish their report, "Green Light: How Good Are Your Mental Health Services for People with Learning Disabilities?", before the end of June.

Mental Health

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether examples of good practice in the provision of clothing to long-stay patients in mental health in-patient units collected from NHS trusts have been placed on the National Institute of Mental Health for England's website; [179007]

(2) how many and what examples of good practice in the provision of clothing to long-stay patients in mental health in-patient units have been collected from NHS trusts by the National Institute of Mental Health for England to date. [179013]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The National Institute for Mental Health in England does not, at present, have any examples of good practice in the provision of clothing to long-stay psychiatric in-patient units on its web site.

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment has been made of the level of support available from local authorities to people with mental health problems since the Social Exclusion Unit's inquiry into mental health issues. [179012]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has not made a systematic assessment of the level of support available from local authorities to people with mental health problems since the social exclusion unit's mental health project.

Primary care trust chief executives and local authority directors of social services, in conjunction with other local authority departments, have lead responsibility for drawing up a local action plan to implement the measures in the report.

The Department has made available to local councils with social services responsibilities £22 million in ring-fenced mental health supported capital expenditure to support the capital costs associated with implementing the social exclusion unit's mental health project.

Modernisation Board Annual Report

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate the cost of producing the Modernisation Board annual report for 2004; how many copies have been printed; and how copies are being made available to NHS *(a)* employees and *(b)* patients. [178237]

Mr. Hutton: The estimated cost of writing, editing, design and publishing the NHS Modernisation Board annual report was £43,000. 6,000 copies of the report have been printed. 3,500 copies will be distributed within the NHS through the strategic health authorities and individual NHS trusts for staff and 2,500 copies have been made available for patients groups and individual patients. Staff and the general public can also download the full report through the Department's website.

Official Meetings (Mayor of London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) on what dates *(a)* he and *(b)* his predecessors have held official meetings with the Mayor of London since July 2000; and what the subject of each meeting was; [171436]

(2) if he will list the official meetings he and his predecessor the right hon. Member for Darlington (Mr. Milburn) have had with the Mayor of London since July 2000 to discuss health matters in London, and the dates and subject of each meeting. [172207]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[pursuant to her reply, 13 May 2004, Official Report, c. 591–92W]:* I regret that my previous response was incorrect. The answer should have been that my right hon. Friend the Member for Darlington (Mr. Milburn) and my right hon. Friend the Minister of State for Health (Mr. Hutton) met the Mayor of London on 20 September 2001 to discuss the issue of promoting the health of Londoners. [172207]

Private Healthcare (NHS Patients)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was spent on buying private healthcare for NHS patients in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available; and what proportion of the total NHS budget this expenditure represented. [177915]

Mr. Hutton: We do not have central figures for the amount spent on buying private healthcare for national health service patients in 1997. In the year 2002–03 the total cost of acute services subcontracted to or directly commissioned by primary care trusts and NHS trusts from non-NHS providers was approximately £110.58 million. The latest figures for total expenditure on acute services in the secondary care environment (hospital and community health service figures (HCHS) was £17.2 billion in 2001–02. Therefore, expenditure on acute healthcare from non-NHS providers represents less than 1 per cent. of total HCHS expenditure. It is not possible to extrapolate the precise amount of money spent in the private sector for 2002–03 from the overall cost of the NHS buying services from non-NHS providers including voluntary and charitable organisations and the independent sector.

Residential Care Homes (London)

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many beds are available in residential care homes in the Greater London area. [177830]

Dr. Ladyman: At 31 March 2001 there were 47,400 care home places in Greater London. This comprises of 18,100 nursing care places and 29,300 residential care places.

Figures for later years have been collected by the National Care Standards Commission but comparable details are not available.

Rubber Ferrules

Mr. Flight: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 24 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1391W on rubber ferrules, who his Department's supplier of rubber ferrules is; and in what country this company is based. [176657]

Mr. Hutton: There are two suppliers of ferrules on the current national health service Purchasing and Supply Agency's national walking aid agreement. They are Sunrise Medical, based in Wollaston, West Midlands; and Stepsafe Ltd., based in Swaffham Bulbeck, Cambridge.

Sexual Health

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many sexually transmitted diseases were diagnosed in each year since 1997, broken down by *(a)* disease and *(b)* strategic health authority; and if he will make a statement. [169937]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to the hon. Member for West Chelmsford (Mr. Burns) on 3 December 2003, *Official Report*, columns 80–82W, which provides the data requested broken down by disease.

The number of sexually transmitted infections diagnosed by strategic health authority between 1997 and 2002 is shown in the table.

Diagnoses of selected sexually transmitted infections[1] by strategic health authority— 1997 to 2002

Strategic health authority	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	5,046	5,241	5,624	6,409	6,906	7,093
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	3,148	3,365	3,892	4,048	4,342	4,494
Birmingham and the Black Country	5,982	4,889	6,026	6,942	9,146	10,250
Cheshire and Merseyside	5,749	5,988	6,980	7,406	7,832	8,843
County Durham and Tees Valley	1,931	1,988	2,303	2,327	2,316	2,766
Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire	3,077	3,343	3,410	3,815	4,029	4,166
Cumbria and Lancashire	3,731	3,908	4,549	4,894	5,216	6,021
Dorset and Somerset	2,465	2,623	2,894	3,310	3,439	3,723
Essex	2,776	2,935	3,389	3,450	4,059	4,391
Greater Manchester	7,197	7,926	9,413	10,572	11,755	11,922
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	3,686	3,922	4,870	5,258	4,977	5,289
Kent and Medway	2,665	2,916	2,905	2,941	2,914	3,417
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	3,624	3,731	3,687	5,221	4,980	4,941
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	4,568	4,859	5,312	5,770	6,067	6,573
North and East Yorkshire and Northern	2,955	2,953	2,449	2,457	3,494	4,773
North Central London	6,430	7,198	7,144	8,249	10,025	9,981
North East London	6,006	6,309	6,956	8,007	9,274	10,737
North West London	9,229	9,304	9,951	12,779	13,326	12,632
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	4,040	3,888	4,463	4,588	4,378	4,822
Shropshire and Staffordshire	2,812	2,940	3,351	3,613	3,906	4,068
South East London	7,739	8,733	9,722	9,254	9,863	10,907
South West London	3,824	4,003	4,800	6,041	6,385	7,853
South West Peninsula	2,862	3,176	3,338	3,626	3,796	4,202
South Yorkshire	5,018	4,965	5,254	5,562	5,898	6,480
Surrey and Sussex	5,198	5,521	5,656	6,860	7,055	8,559
Thames Valley	4,720	5,478	5,455	6,427	6,698	6,826
Trent	7,260	7,117	7,090	7,482	8,132	8,863
West Yorkshire	5,393	6,151	6,435	6,823	7,629	9,087

[1] Primary and secondary syphilis, uncomplicated gonorrhoea, uncomplicated Chlamydial infection, Anogenital herpes (first attack), Anogenital warts (first attack).

Source:
KC60 dataset.

Waiting Times

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of patients were admitted to hospital within nine months of referral for admission in the last year for which figures are available. [176856]

Mr. Hutton: Data are collected on the number of patients who are admitted to hospital from being placed on the inpatient waiting list. For the most recent financial year for 2002–03, 90 per cent. of all admissions with a valid waiting time were admitted within nine months[1]. During 2002–03 the maximum inpatient waiting time was 15 months. The current maximum inpatient waiting time in 2004–05 is nine months, reducing to six months by the end of 2005.

[1] Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health.

Note:
Time waited statistics from Hospital Episode Statistics are not the same as the published waiting list statistics. HES provides counts and time waited for all patients admitted to hospital within a given period whereas the published waiting list statistics count those waiting for treatment on a specific date and how long they have been on the waiting list. Also, HES calculates the time waited as the difference between admission and decision to admit dates. Unlike published waiting list statistics, this is not adjusted for self-deferrals or periods of medical/social suspension.

Written Answers to Questions

Friday 18 June 2004

TREASURY

Child Tax Credit

Simon Hughes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families in Greater London, broken down by borough, are eligible for the child tax credit; and what the take-up rate is. [179401]

Dawn Primarolo: The estimated number of families in London receiving child tax credit (CTC) is shown in "Child and Working Tax Credit Statistics. Geographical analyses. April 2004", which is on the Inland Revenue website at www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/menu.htm. The estimated number of families in each London borough receiving CTC is shown in "Child and Working Tax Credit Statistics. January 2004", at the same site. The estimates are based on a sample of cases, and are subject to sampling uncertainty.

No estimate is available of the number of families in London who are eligible for the child tax credit.

Greater London Constituencies

Simon Hughes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which Greater London constituencies experienced the greatest fall in electorate between *(a)* 1990 and 2000 and *(b)* 1997 and 2004 in (i) numerical and (ii) percentage terms, listed in descending order. [179400]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Simon Hughes, dated 18 June 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your question concerning the Greater London constituencies that have experienced the greatest fall in electorate between 1990 and 2000 and between 1997 and 2004. (179400)

New constituencies came into place in 1996, therefore it has only been possible to compare figures for 1990 with those for 1995.

I am placing four tables in the House of Commons Library.

Table 1 shows the Greater London constituencies that have experienced decreases in electors between February 1990 and February 1995, ranked by numerical decrease. Table 2 shows the same constituencies ranked in order of percentage decreases in electorate over the same period.

Table 3 shows the Greater London constituencies that have experienced the greatest fall in electors between February 1997 and December 2003, the latest date for which data are available (ranked by numerical decrease). Table 4 shows the same constituencies ranked in order of percentage decreases in electorate over the same period.

TRANSPORT

A30

Ms Atherton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport on what date he expects a decision to be made on the A30 dualling from Bodmin to Indian Queens. [179581]

Mr. Jamieson: The Secretary of State for Transport and the Deputy Prime Minister are currently considering the Inspector's report of the public local inquiry and will issue their joint decision as soon as possible.

Dunstable Northern Bypass

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the Dunstable Northern bypass from the A5 to the M1 will be built; and what funding has been specifically allocated to build it. [179442]

Mr. Jamieson: The M1-A5 Dunstable Northern Link Road is in the Department's Targeted Programme of Improvements. The contract is expected to be part of a package, which includes the widening of the M1 between junctions 10 and 13. Subject to statutory procedures and the availability of funds, works could start during 2008–09.

The estimated cost of the Dunstable scheme is £48.1 million.

Liquefied Petroleum Gas

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* private and *(b)* commercial liquefied petroleum gas fuelled vehicles there are in the UK. [179422]

Mr. Jamieson: According to the Liquid Petroleum Gas Association (LPGA), there were 107,000 LPG powered vehicles on the road in the UK on 31 December 2003. Although figures on the breakdown between private and commercial vehicles are not recorded, some 25,000 of these vehicles were vans, and a straw poll of major suppliers carried out in 2003 indicated that of the 82,000 remaining vehicles there were an estimated 250 black taxis in London, and at least 8,000 operating as private taxi hire throughout the UK.

Noise Pollution

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 7 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 70W, on noise pollution (roads), what other methods are used to reduce noise from road surfaces. [179175]

Mr. Jamieson: My answer of 7 June referred to the sound-proofing of residential properties. Quieter road surfaces and noise barriers are other methods that are used to reduce noise from road surfaces on the strategic road network.

Road Safety

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many pedestrian deaths in road accidents there were where the pedestrian had over 100 mg of alcohol per 100 ml of blood in each year since

1997; and what percentage of pedestrian road accident deaths in *(a)* England and *(b)* each region this represented in each case. [179152]

Mr. Jamieson: Not all pedestrians who die in road accidents are tested for blood alcohol level. Among those who were tested, the percentage of pedestrian fatalities in Great Britain who had blood alcohol levels over 100 mg/100 ml are shown in the following table, for the years 1997 to 2001 (the latest year for which this information is available). Figures are not readily available for England or by region.

	Percentage of pedestrian fatalities with blood/alcohol 100 mg/ml: Great Britain
1997	35
1998	35
1999	37
2000	33
2001	38

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many fatal road traffic accidents there have been in each county in England since 1997. [179423]

Mr. Jamieson: The information requested is shown in the following table.

Fatal road accidents, by county: England 1997 to 2002

Accidents

County	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
Avon	46	52	37	43	51	41
Bedfordshire	37	28	44	35	37	44
Berkshire	33	36	44	55	36	46
Buckinghamshire	48	47	44	44	51	59
Cambridgeshire	58	60	63	72	53	56
Cheshire	59	60	68	66	64	63
Cleveland	23	15	21	23	25	18
Cornwall	41	31	27	33	36	48
Cumbria	48	46	54	48	45	45
Derbyshire	62	60	55	55	42	56
Devon	52	51	46	54	51	54
Dorset	40	31	35	39	37	52
Durham	32	38	29	20	26	38
East Sussex	38	40	44	55	39	48
Essex	83	79	104	82	111	85
Gloucestershire	48	36	40	33	47	38
Greater London	263	220	254	270	294	267
Greater Manchester	111	98	84	99	102	81
Hampshire	70	72	86	81	66	84
Hereford and Worcester	58	59	29	43	53	55
Hertfordshire	52	53	47	49	43	54
Humberside	63	58	68	41	52	44
Isle of Wight	4	3	5	6	1	5
Kent	107	83	94	82	96	100
Lancashire	75	81	70	60	74	62
Leicestershire	58	74	82	56	60	71
Lincolnshire	73	75	87	63	74	77
Merseyside	50	48	54	68	42	55
Norfolk	55	62	64	64	56	70
Northants	53	49	61	50	40	50
Northumberland	25	29	25	18	18	24
North Yorkshire	74	75	63	77	73	84
Nottinghamshire	77	81	62	66	77	70
Oxfordshire	48	59	55	55	47	36
Shropshire	29	27	42	42	35	36
Somerset	38	44	34	41	44	41
South Yorkshire	43	53	46	55	46	56
Staffordshire	68	62	52	64	75	56
Suffolk	42	21	45	50	49	42
Surrey	66	56	69	66	48	58
Tyne and Wear	45	26	35	24	24	37
Warwickshire	53	48	42	57	49	48
West Midlands	108	93	78	71	82	77
West Sussex	43	54	39	35	55	38
West Yorkshire	115	100	108	115	128	110
Wiltshire	47	42	43	34	46	38
England	2,761	2,615	2,678	1,659	2,700	2,717

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Fly-tipping (Merseyside)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on how many occasions Merseyside local authorities have used their new powers to investigate and tackle fly-tipping since the inception of these powers. [178330]

Mr. Morley: No data is collated on how often local authorities use the specific stop, search and seizure powers and investigation powers that were extended to waste collection authorities under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.

Information can be derived from returns to the Flycapture database on numbers of prosecutions:

St. Helens—182 incidents, 20 investigations

Sefton—171 incidents, No actions recorded yet

Knowsley—215 incidents, No actions recorded yet

Liverpool City—Not yet registered for Flycapture

Wirral—Registered but not submitted a return for April

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on progress by Merseyside local authorities in the adoption of the standard classification system for the reporting of fly-tipping. [178331]

Mr. Morley: The Flycapture database that has been developed between Defra, the Environment Agency and the Local Government Association went 'live' on 5 April. The first returns were due to be sent by 25 May.

So far, progress nationally on adopting Flycapture has been good with 92 per cent. of waste collection authorities in England and Wales registering.

The progress of local authorities in the Merseyside area is detailed:

Liverpool City—Not yet registered

St. Helens—Registered and submitted data

Sefton —Registered and submitted data

Knowsley—Registered and submitted data

Wirral—Registered but not submitted data for April.

Abandoned Vehicles

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many abandoned vehicles there were in England and Wales in each financial year since 2001–02 *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down by region. [176937]

Mr. Morley: Figures for numbers of abandoned vehicles removed and destroyed are compiled from the Defra Municipal Waste Management Survey for 2001–02 and 2002–03 and the Defra Abandoned Vehicle Survey for 2002–03.

Figures for England broken down by region are listed as follows:

Thousand vehicles

Region	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
North East	3.8	6.9
North West	13.0	18.5
Yorkshire and the Humber	12.7	15.7
East Midlands	17.6	20.5
West Midlands	12.0	26.0
East	42.2	44.4
London	104.5	94.5
South East	57.3	56.2
South West	23.3	27.3
England	286.3	310.1

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many abandoned cars each local authority in England and Wales stated they had removed in their submissions to the most recent Municipal Waste Management Survey. [176938]

Mr. Morley: The latest data for abandoned vehicles removed and destroyed by each local authority in England are taken both from the 2002–03 Defra Municipal Waste Management Survey and the 2002–03 Defra Abandoned Vehicle Survey. The results from either survey are available in the Library of the House.

Cardiff Process

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps the Government is taking to ensure the success at EU level of the Cardiff process to integrate environmental considerations into sectoral policy. [178704]

Mr. Morley: The Government has been an active supporter of the Cardiff process since its launch under the UK presidency in 1998. The European Commission has recently produced a stocktaking report of the Cardiff process ['Integrating environmental considerations into other policy areas—a stocktaking of the Cardiff process' COM (2004) 394]. This document shows that whilst some progress has been made in important areas such as agriculture (reform of the CAP) and energy (Directive 2004/87/EC on Greenhouse gas emissions) more work is still needed. My department will consider the recommendations in the stocktaking carefully. In the meantime my department has been considering ways of promoting environmental integration through various other tools. For example, we see a fair and balanced impact assessment of new EU policy proposals as a key tool in promoting environmental integration; my department have commissioned a study investigating the Commission's new impact assessment system and will be sharing its conclusions and recommendations with the Commission. We will also be looking for further improvements in the EU Sustainable Development Strategy which is being reviewed this year.

Ceramics Industry

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the UK ceramics industry about *(a)* European regulation and *(b)* the Government's implementation thereof; and what action she has taken as a result. [177449]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* The Ceramic industry is subject to a range of EU legislation. I believe that, in this case, the hon. Member may be referring to the European Union Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS). The ceramic industry is one of the sectors covered by EU ETS.

Government have held discussions with the ceramic industry in relation to the EU ETS through formal consultation and a sector meeting held on 27 February. A meeting with the ceramic sector was held on 11 May to renegotiate their Climate Change Agreement targets. This work will also feed into the EU ETS allocation process. Representatives from the ceramic industry have also been present at various seminars held by Government, the most recent being on allocation methodology held on 20 May.

Officials have also worked closely with the British Ceramic Confederation over the implementation of the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Directive, including their involvement in implementation trials and discussions about interpretation and statutory guidance. Amendments have been made to the guidance in the light of their comments. The British Ceramic Confederation is a member of the Department's Industry Forum concerning the Pollution Prevention and Control regime, which meets twice a year.

Common Agricultural Policy

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many UK farm holdings received total annual Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) payments in excess of *(a)* £500,000, *(b)* £750,000 and *(c)* £1,000,000 in each CAP accounting year in the last five years for which figures are available. [177122]

Alun Michael: The number of farm holdings in England that received total annual CAP payments in the requested bands is shown in the following table.

These figures have been taken from European Agriculture Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) accounts. The EAGGF financial year runs from 16 October to 15 October.

The information for other countries within the UK is a matter for their devolved assemblies.

EAGGF year	*Over £500,000*	*Over £750,000*	*Over £1,000,000*
2000	32	9	4
2001	27	11	7
2002	25	8	5
2003	37	19	11

The Rural Payments Agency introduced a new accounting system in 1999 so complete figures for that year could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Secondments

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many staff in her Department and its agencies were seconded from the *(a)* private and *(b)* academic sector in each of the last three years. [174821]

Alun Michael: The number of staff in Defra and its agencies seconded from the private and academic sector in each of the last three years is shown in the following table:

	Private sector	*Academic sector*
2001–02	4	2
2002–03	4	0
2003–04	7	0

The purpose of bringing people into the Civil Service from other sectors is to fill skills gaps and to add dimensions and insights from outside. For the individuals themselves, the secondment provides experience of another sector and an opportunity to enhance existing skills and develop others.

Secondments are part of the Interchange Initiative which promotes the exchange of people and good practice between the Civil Service and other organisations. Before an interchange can occur, all parties must be satisfied that no conflict of interest arises.

Hazardous Waste

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much hazardous waste was illegally dumped in *(a)* Merseyside and *(b)* Crosby in each of the last three years; and how many prosecutions resulted. [177861]

Mr. Morley: Information has been provided for the numbers of incidents involving illegal deposits of hazardous waste recorded by the Environment Agency. While the Agency holds prosecution data for all illegal deposits of waste, hazardous waste prosecutions are not themselves separately recorded.

Local authorities may additionally hold records of those incidents and prosecutions that they have taken but this is not held centrally.

There are no Agency recorded incidents or prosecutions relating to the illegal deposit of hazardous waste in Crosby in any of the last three years.

Those for Merseyside are set out in the following tables.

Table 1—Total incidents of illegal hazardous waste deposits recorded by the Agency

	Merseyside	*Crosby*
2002	12	0
2003	9	0
2004	4	0

Table 2—Total number of Agency prosecutions for all illegal waste deposits (including non-hazardous)

	Merseyside	*Crosby*
2002	15	0
2003	7	0
2004	2	0

Ministerial Speeches

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many speeches she made between 9 June 2003 and 1 February 2004; and where a copy of each speech can be obtained. [156147]

Margaret Beckett: I made 19 speeches during the eight month period from 9 June 2003 to 1 February 2004. Copies of my keynote speeches can be found on the Defra Website: http://defraweb/corporate/ministers/speeches/default.asp. [156147]

Orchards

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with English Nature about biodiversity in English orchards. [177784]

Alun Michael: Officials have been in discussion with English Nature with a view to finding a way forward within the Single Payment Scheme for traditional grazed orchards (that are important in the biodiversity context) to remain eligible for CAP subsidy.

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the EU about a derogation for *(a)* some and *(b)* all English orchards allowing them to be included in the Single Farm Scheme. [177785]

Alun Michael: Orchards are not eligible land for the purposes of the Single Payment Scheme and there is no prospect of a general derogation from this rule for any member state. However, officials remain in discussion with the Commission over the status of traditional grazed orchards.

Radio Identifier Frequency Devices

Mr. Lepper: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to commission research into the environmental impact of the use of radio identifier frequency devices in retail goods. [178245]

Alun Michael: We are not aware of any particular environmental concerns relating to the use of radio frequency identification devices and currently have no plans to commission any research into their impact.

Sewerage

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects to bring forward proposals in response to the Review of Existing Private Sewers and Drains in England and Wales. [178954]

Mr. Morley: The Department plans to publish a response to the consultation in the summer. This will summarise responses, give the Government's views and set out the issues that need to be addressed before a final decision can be made. A decision paper should be published early next year.

Waste Disposal

Mr. Anthony D. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what assessment she has made of the *(a)* recycling and *(b)* incineration of (i) oxo-biodegradable plastic and (ii) conventional plastic; [176907]

(2) what assessment she has made of the effect of oxo-biodegradable plastic in combating litter; [176908]

(3) what research she has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on oxo-biodegradable plastics, with particular reference to the contribution they may make to a better environment; [176910]

(4) what assessment she has made of the effect on the environment of making short-life plastic products degradable. [176911]

Mr. Morley: The National Non-Food Crops Centre (NNFCC) recently published a review of current knowledge on the environmental profiles of biodegradable polymers (BDPs). The main focus of the review is on BDPs made from renewable feedstocks such as starch, polylactic acid and cellulose and their environmental performance compared to conventional plastics. The summary report, "Biodegradable Polymers and Sustainability: Insights from Life Cycle Assessment", can be viewed on the NNFCC website at: www.nnfcc.co.uk

The Environment Agency will follow up this work with two Life Cycle Analysis research projects. The first will consider disposable plastic carrier bags from supermarkets and alternative product systems (e.g. paper and bioplastics) and the other will look at food packaging product systems. Oil-based biodegradable (oxo-biodegradable) plastics are included in the scope of the alternative materials. The results of the research will be reported March 2005.

HEALTH

Arm's Length Bodies

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the arm's length bodies for which his Department has responsibility, indicating in each case whether it is an *(a)* executive agency, *(b)* special health authority, *(c)* non departmental public body and *(d)* other body. [175313]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A list of the Department's arm's length bodies is shown in the tables.

Executive agencies

Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency

NHS Estates

NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency

Special health authorities

Counter Fraud and Security Management Service

Dental Vocational Training Authority

Family Health Services Appeal Authority

Health Development Agency

Health Protection Agency

Mental Health Act Commission

NHS Appointments Commission

NHS Direct

NHS Information Authority

NHS Litigation Authority

NHS Logistics

NHS Pensions Agency

NHS Professionals

NHSU

National Blood Authority

National Clinical Assessment Authority

National Institute for Clinical Excellence

National Patient Safety Agency

National Treatment Agency

Prescription Pricing Authority

UK Transplant

Executive non-departmental public bodies

Commission for Healthcare Audit and Inspection (The Healthcare Commission)

Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health

Commission for Social Care Inspection

General Social Care Council

Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority

Independent Regulator of NHS Foundation Trusts

National Biological Standards Board (UK)

National Radiological Protection Board

Public Health Laboratory Service Board

Other bodies

Council for the Regulation of Health Care Professionals

Dental Practice Board

Postgraduate Medical Education and Training Board

Breastfeeding

Ms Drown: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether a breastfeeding strategy for England will be included in the Children's National Service Framework. [178289]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The national service framework for children, young people and maternity services will set out standards for a wide range of health and social care services and the interface with education. The standards are likely to set out what support should be available to children, young people and pregnant women.

The Government encourage breastfeeding as the best form of nutrition for infants and has set an national health service priorities and planning framework target to increase breastfeeding initiation by two percentage points a year between 2003–06, focusing on women from disadvantaged groups.

Chorley and South Ribble PCT

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people had treatment in Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care Trust in each of the age groups *(a)* two to 11, *(b)* 11 to 18, *(c)* 18 to 30, *(d)* 30 to 40, *(e)* 40 to 60 and *(f)* 60 to 70 in each of the last five years, broken down by gender. [179281]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information is not gathered on the number of people receiving treatment.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public money is earmarked for health over the next two years in Chorley. [179282]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The allocations to the Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care Trust are as follows:

	£
2004–05	181,153,000
2005–06	205,458,000

Depression (Young People)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many finished consultant episodes for depression in children and adolescents there were in *(a)* England and *(b)* each strategic health authority in each year since 1996; and if he will make a statement. [178480]

Dr. Ladyman: The available information is shown in the table. The National Institute for Clinical Excellence is currently developing a guideline on the identification and management of depression in children in primary care and specialist services. The guideline is scheduled to be published in 2005.

Primary diagnosis (ICD-10) F32—Depressive episode and F33—Recurrent depressive episode; Count of finished consultant episodes for age groups 0–15 and 16–17, National Health Service hospitals in England 1999–2000 to 2002–03

	0–15	*16 and 17-year-olds*	*0–17 total*
1996–97	190	315	505
1997–98	214	283	497
1998–99	212	251	463
1999–2000	227	263	490
2000–01	189	40	429
2001–02	225	239	464
2002–03	248	270	518

Notes:
Ungrossed Data
Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data.
Finished Consultant Episode (FCE)
An FCE is defined as a period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that the figures do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within the year.
Diagnosis (Primary Diagnosis)
The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 (seven prior to 2002–03) diagnosis fields in the Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) data set and provides the main reason why the patient was in hospital.

General Practitioners

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioners are practising in the NHS in Lincolnshire; and how many people were practising 10 years ago. [177036]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 10 June 2004]:* The earliest available data shows that in 1994, there were 337 general medical practitioners, excluding retainers, registrars and locums, in the then Lincolnshire Health Authority.

The latest data shows that in 2003, there were 375 general medical practitioners, excluding retainers, registrars and locums, in Lincolnshire.

Hospital Capacity

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if on divert is a phrase recommended by his Department to be used by hospitals that are unable to accommodate additional patients; and how often in the last three months hospitals in the Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust have been on divert. [178438]

Dr. Ladyman: On divert is an expression used in the national health service to describe a technique used to manage variations in local demand for emergency care. NHS trusts are said to be on divert if they have agreed with their neighbouring trusts and strategic health authority that some or all of the emergency patients who would usually be taken to one of the hospitals within that trust will, for a temporary period, be taken to alternative hospitals. Information on the number of diverts at Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust during the last three months, if any, is not held centrally.

ME

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether his Department spends money on helping ME sufferers in *(a)* the North West, *(b)* Lancashire and *(c)* Chorley. [179347]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not collected centrally. Allocation of funding for particular treatments are matters for the local primary care trust.

Mental Illness

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he is taking to educate the public about mental illnesses to tackle the stigma associated with these illnesses. [178144]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 15 June 2004]:* The National Institute for Mental Health in England (NIMHE) is about to publish a new five-year strategic plan to tackle stigma and discrimination on mental health grounds. The plan will be launched shortly and will build on the foundation of the Department's "Mind out for mental health" campaign and key recommendations of a scoping review commissioned by NIMHE of what works in anti stigma and discrimination. In line with the evidence, the programme will target key audiences and be underpinned by people affected by mental health problems being at the heart of all work. The brand and first resources and projects will be formally launched on World Mental Health Day, 10 October 2004.

This work will support the implementation of the social exclusion unit's action plan on social exclusion and mental health that was launched on 14 June.

MRSA

Miss Widdecombe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to compensate victims of MRSA in NHS hospitals. [178106]

Miss Melanie Johnson: We have no plans to award compensation to patients with methicillin resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) in national health service trusts.

NHS Direct

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many calls have been made to NHS Direct in each month since November 2001. [178455]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of calls made to NHS Direct in each month since November 2001 are shown in the table.

Number of calls answered by NHS Direct since November 2001

	Calls answered
November 2001	415,845
December 2001	513,741
January 2002	518,375
February 2002	459,305
March 2002	500,547
April 2002	471,551
May 2002	478,767
June 2002	485,061
July 2002	479,096
August 2002	485,296
September 2002	420,017
October 2002	488,856
November 2002	475,026
December 2002	570,227
January 2003	547,872
February 2003	509,29?
March 2003	575,946
April 2003	579,994
May 2003	552,749
June 2003	523,997
July 2003	532,447
August 2003	520,148
September 2003	476,102
October 2003	511,835
November 2003	545,826
December 2003	570,349
January 2004	548,523
February 2004	506,112
March 2004	542,014
April 2004	544,879
May 2004	554,454

Source:
NHS Direct health intelligence unit.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the 10 most common reasons for calls to NHS Direct over the last year. [178479]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the most common reasons for calling NHS Direct has only been collected nationally by the NHS Direct health intelligence unit since January 2004. The 10 most common reasons for calls to NHS Direct from January 2004 to March 2004 are shown in the table.

10 most common reasons for calls to NHS Direct, January 2004 to March 2004

Algorithm	*Percentage of overall*
Abdominal Pain	4.4
Chest Pain	2.3
Headache	2.3
Toothache	2.2
Rash Toddler (Age 1–4 years)	2.1
Fever Toddler (Age 1–4 years)	1.9
Sore Throat	1.9
Ingestion Toxic	1.8
Diarrhoea	1.7
Vomiting	1.7

Source:
NHS Direct health intelligence unit.

NHS (Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he will publish the Government's conclusions on proposals to amend the NHS (Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 1992. [179248]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Government have considered the report of the expert advisory group set up to advise how best to implement the proposals and we will come forward with further announcements as soon as possible.

The Government remain fully committed to reforming the current regulatory regime.

Smoking

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research his Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the effects of smoking-related diseases as they affect each social class. [178934]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Smoking has been identified as the principal reason for the inequalities in death rates between rich and poor in the United Kingdom. We commissioned the then Heath Education Authority to undertake research into the effects of smoking related diseases. "The UK Smoking Epidemic: Deaths in 1995", published in 1998, provides information on the estimated number and percentage of deaths attributable to smoking related diseases and includes some information on deaths by social class. A copy is available in the Library.

We have now commissioned the Health Development Agency to undertake a similar study estimating the number and percentage of smoking attributable deaths by primary care trust and strategic health authority which should be available later this year.

There is also a larger proportion of smokers in lower socio-economic groups, therefore a disproportionately high proportion of people in those groups are likely to suffer from smoking related diseases. In England in 2002, 19 per cent. of those in managerial and professional occupations were smokers, compared with 31 per cent. of those in routine and manual groups.

Wheelchairs

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance he has issued to *(a)* NHS trusts and *(b)* social services departments on the expected safe lifetime of electric wheelchairs. [178497]

Dr. Ladyman: The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has specific responsibility on behalf of the Secretary of State to safeguard public health where medical devices are involved. Electric powered wheelchairs come within this overall remit.

MHRA has issued guidance which is available to health and social services. This guidance relates to the management, purchase, repair and maintenance of medical devices. This guidance has also been incorporated into the NHS controls assurance standards for medical devices.

The wheelchair manufacturer should provide information on the expected safe lifetime of his product. This is dependent on the use, repair and maintenance being carried out in line with the manufacturer's instructions.

Many manufacturers base their lifetime information on the results that they obtain from the international standards for impact and fatigue testing of wheelchairs during their product development. This standard is generally taken to equate to approximately five years of moderate use of an occupied wheelchair.

Infrequent light usage of a wheelchair combined with appropriate maintenance may allow the lifetime to be extended. A lower quality wheelchair and inappropriate or heavy usage combined with inadequate maintenance will shorten the expected safe lifetime of the wheelchair.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance he has issued to *(a)* NHS trusts and *(b)* social services departments about the use of reconditioned motors in electric wheelchairs. [178498]

Dr. Ladyman: The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has specific responsibility on behalf of the Secretary of State to safeguard public health where medical devices are involved. Electric powered wheelchairs come within this overall remit.

MHRA has issued guidance, which is available to, health and social services. This guidance relates to the management, repair and maintenance of medical devices. This guidance has also been incorporated into the NHS Controls Assurance Standards for medical devices.

Within this guidance the use of reconditioned parts such as motors for electric wheelchairs is acknowledged as an option that can be cost effective. However, the source and specification of the reconditioning process is a critical element. It is generally recommended that reconditioning is carried out by the original equipment manufacturer. If it is to be carried out by another source then it is essential that the reconditioner can prove that the process has produced the same level of safety, technical specification and performance as the original equipment. The fitting of the reconditioned motor and any subsequent changes that are required to the maintenance process for the wheelchair itself will also need to be recorded in the equipment records for the wheelchairs.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Carers Allowance

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects to reach a decision on the effect on the entitlement to carers allowance of receipt by carers of supporting people payments. [179353]

Mr. Pond: Supporting People payments made to carers contracted to Supporting People service providers count as earnings for the purpose of entitlement to carers' allowance.

Child Support Agency

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many people were committed to prison because they had committed offences relating to the work of the Child Support Agency in each year since the Agency was established; [177532]

(2) how many parents have failed to pay Child Support in each year since 1997; and of these how many have *(a)* received a driving ban and *(b)* received a jail sentence in each year; [177539]

(3) if he will estimate the number of non-resident parents who have had their driving licences removed by the courts in each year since April 2001 as a result of the provisions introduced under the Child Support, Pensions and Social Security Act 2000; [177540]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Mike Isaac to Mr. David Willets, dated 18 June 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary questions about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive. As he is currently on leave I am replying on your behalf.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people were committed to prison because they had committed offences relating to the work of the Child Support Agency in each year since the Agency was established.

You then asked two further related questions, which requested information on the removal of driving licences:

How many parents have failed to provide Child Support in each year since 1997: and of these how many have *(a)* received a driving ban and *(b)* received a jail sentence in each year; and

The number of non-resident parents who have had their driving licences removed by the courts in each year since April 2001 as a result of the provisions introduced under the Child Support, Pensions and Social Security Act 2000.

The number of non-resident parents that have failed to make child maintenance payments since 1997 are shown as follows. The figures are taken from the 5 per cent. quarterly samples of the Child Support Computer System from March 1997 to February 2003. The data looks at compliance in every quarter of the year therefore those who are nil compliant will have been nil compliant within every quarter of the year.

£000

	Total cases with full maintenance Assessment	Number of non-resident parents that are nil compliant
1997–1998	674.3	45.3
1998–1999	854.2	57.7
1999–2000	967.2	63.8
2000–2001	1,052.6	63.9
2001–2002	1,075.6	59.0
2002–2003	1,116.4	53.2

Notes:
Figures are in thousands and rounded to the nearest hundred.

Committal action:

From March 1999 to May 2004 there have been 171 suspended committal sentences. The first specific reference we have to a non-resident parent serving a prison sentence is in 2002–2003. Information pre dating 2001–2002 does not specify whether the non-resident parent served a prison sentence; the records only show whether a warrant for committal was issued.

2001–2002—0 sentences served.

2002–2003—4 sentences served.

2003–2004—8 sentences served.

Removal of driving licences:

The power to withdraw driving licences was brought into effect on 2 April 2001 (under the Child Support, Pensions and Social Security Act 2000).

2001–2002—3 suspended licence sentences issued.

2002–2003—1 driving licence removed and 7 suspended licence sentences issued.

2003–2004—1 driving licence removed and 9 suspended licence sentences issued.

Please note committal to prison or disqualification from driving is only considered after all other enforcement options have been attempted or discounted. We use these ultimate sanctions as the final lever to achieve compliance rather than as a punitive measure for those non-resident parents who will not pay. This explains the huge difference between the number of warrants we obtain and the number of driving licences withdrawn or prison sentences actually served.

Council Tax Benefit

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people *(a)* have claimed and *(b)* are eligible for council tax benefit in Greater London, broken down by borough, in each of the last three years. [179357]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested. Estimates of the number of entitled non-recipients are not available below national level. The national level estimates can be found in a series of DWP reports entitled "Income Related Benefits Estimates of Take-Up". The latest publication relates to the financial year 2001–02; copies of this and previous reports are available from the Library.

The available information is in the table.

Council tax benefit recipients by London borough

Thousand

Local authority	2002	2003	2004
London GOR	610.4	625.4	646.7
Barking and Dagenham	18.0	18.4	18.7
Barnet	20.0	20.3	21.7
Bexley	13.0	13.0	13.4
Brent	21.5	22.9	24.4
Bromley	15.0	14.1	16.2

Council tax benefit recipients by London borough

Thousand

Local authority	2002	2003	2004
Camden	24.1	23.8	23.5
City of London	0.4	0.4	0.4
Croydon	22.9	23.3	24.3
Ealing	19.9	19.6	22.0
Enfield	23.1	22.8	25.0
Greenwich	22.8	23.9	24.0
Hackney	28.2	29.8	25.8
Hammersmith and Fulham	16.8	16.6	17.4
Haringey	24.7	25.8	27.1
Harrow	11.6	11.5	12.8
Havering	14.7	14.6	15.2
Hillingdon	16.2	15.7	16.8
Hounslow	16.4	16.7	16.9
Islington	24.9	24.6	26.8
Kensington and Chelsea	12.1	12.5	12.0
Kingston upon Thames	6.7	6.2	7.0
Lambeth	25.5	29.9	29.8
Lewisham	26.8	26.8	27.1
Merton	10.8	10.7	10.9
Newham	28.3	31.2	32.0
Redbridge	15.5	15.7	16.6
Richmond upon Thames	8.4	8.5	8.9
Southwark	33.0	34.4	34.4
Sutton	8.3	9.8	10.0
Tower Hamlets	28.8	29.3	29.9
Waltham Forest	19.9	20.2	20.7
Wandsworth	18.1	17.6	19.6
Westminster	14.1	14.6	15.5

Notes:
1. The data refers to benefit units, which may be a single person or a couple.
2. The figures are rounded to the nearest hundred and expressed in thousands.
3. Council tax benefit totals exclude any Second Adult Rebate cases.
4. Figures include estimates for non-responding local authorities.

Source:
Housing benefit and Council Tax Benefit Management Information System Quarterly 100 per cent. caseload stock-count taken in February 2002, 2003 and 2004.

CABINET OFFICE

Departmental Responsibilities

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what mechanisms exist to distinguish between those matters which are his Department's responsibilities and those which are directly those of the Prime Minister. [179463]

Mr. Alexander: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 14 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 703W.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

All-postal Ballots

Mr. Amess: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what estimate he has made of extra costs arising from problems with distribution of ballot papers in regions for which all-postal ballots are being held for elections on 10 June. [178403]

Mr. Leslie: Returning officers have the contractual relationship with suppliers of ballot packs. They will be submitting claims for their costs of the all-postal ballots to the Elections Claims Unit in due course. When those claims have been received, it will be possible to make an estimate of any costs falling to Returning Officers arising from any problems with printing and distribution.

Environmental Cases

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) how many applications for judicial review relating to environmental matters were granted permission to proceed in each year since 1997; and what proportion of the total number of applications this represented in each year; [179559]

(2) how many applications there were for judicial review in the High Court relating to environmental matters in each year since 1997; and what proportion of the total number of applications this represented in each year; [179560]

(3) how many cases relating to environmental matters were granted leave to appeal to the House of Lords in each year since 1997; and what proportion of the total number of cases heard by the legal committee of the House of Lords this represented in each year; [179561]

(4) how many cases relating to environmental matters were granted leave to appeal to the Court of Appeal in each year since 1997; and what proportion of the total number of appeals to the Court of Appeal this represented in each year. [179562]

Mr. Leslie: The Administrative Court Office's case management system does not identify cases by the category of "environmental" matters. The Administrative Court cannot therefore provide the information requested without incurring disproportionate costs.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Greyhounds

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many greyhounds were bred for racing in the UK in 2003. [179233]

Mr. Caborn: There are no precise figures available for the number of greyhounds bred for racing in the UK in 2003.

However, 10,709 greyhounds were registered with the English Stud Book in 2003.

Licensed Premises

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many licensed premises serving alcohol in England there were in each year since 1997. [179432]

Mr. Caborn: Statistics on the number of licensed premises and clubs serving alcohol are collected on a triennial basis. Figures are available for 1998 and 2001—all figures are as at 30 June.

	1998	*2001*
On licence	104,057	102,551
Off licence	42,462	41,742
Registered clubs	21,084	20,487
Theatres	262	201
Total	167,865	164,981

The collection of figures for 2004 is currently under way.

Pre-owned Assets

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what recent discussions she has had with the Treasury on tax on pre-owned assets. [179180]

Mr. Caborn: Changes to the taxation regime are a question for my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Measures to amend the tax treatment of pre-owned assets, intended to deter abuse of the inheritance tax "gift with reservation" rules, were announced on 10 December 2003 in the pre-Budget report.

The Minister for Media and Heritage—my right hon. Friend, Lord McIntosh of Haringey—wrote to the Paymaster-General in February to ensure that consequences for heritage assets were taken into account in the detailed workings of the income tax charge on pre-owned assets.

Details of the charge, and proposals for further consultation on valuation and the rates of return for chattels and intangibles, are included in Inland Revenue 'Budget Notice 40: Tax Treatment of Pre-Owned Assets'.

Racehorses

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many horses were bred for racing in the United Kingdom in each of the last five years. [179514]

Mr. Caborn: The numbers of thoroughbred horses bred for racing in the UK in each of the last five years is as follows:

	Number
2003	5,432
2002	5,156
2001	4,977
2000	5,194
1999	5,363

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

British Indian Ocean

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what consultations were conducted by his Department before publication of the British Indian Ocean Territory (Immigration) Order 2004 and the British Indian Ocean Territory (Constitution) Order 2004. [179520]

Mr. Rammell: Before the British Indian Ocean Territory (Constitution) Order 2004 and the British Indian Ocean Territory (Immigration) Order 2004 were submitted to Her Majesty the Queen in Council, my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary gave very careful consideration to all relevant interests and concerns, including the feasibility of the re-settlement of a civilian population in the British Indian Ocean Territory and the likely financial and other commitments which that would entail, and also its impact on the availability and effective use of the territory for defence purposes.

Butler Inquiry

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the oral answer of 15 March 2004, *Official Report, House of Lords*, columns 1–3, of the Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, what export controls were in place at the time of the sale of biological materials to Iraq by the United States. [176578]

Mr. Rammell: The exports of biological materials from the United States to Iraq in the 1980s were licensed by the US Department of Commerce under the (US) Export Administration Act.

Chagos Islanders

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what arrangements have been made since 2000 for Chagos islanders to be allowed to visit Diego Garcia and the Chagos Islands. [179521]

Mr. Rammell: We have twice put in hand preparations to arrange such a visit, most recently in 2002. However, those preparations fell through for reasons outside our control. Nevertheless, we remain ready to consider the re-instatement of the visit once the situation permits.

Correspondence

David Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he expects to reply to the letter of 5 May from the hon. Member for Walsall, North regarding a constituent, ref. PO 5158/4. [177875]

Mr. Mullin: A reply will be sent shortly.

International Criminal Court

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list those countries which have yet to ratify the Rome Statute; and what efforts his Department is making to encourage those countries to ratify the Statute. [177716]

Mr. Rammell: A list of countries that have ratified the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court can be found on its website at: http://untreaty.un.org/ENGLISH/bible/englishinternetbible/partI/chapterXVIII/treaty10.asp.

It is a UK and EU objective to increase the universality and jurisdiction of the ICC by urging as many states as possible to ratify the Rome Statute. The EU has a Common Position and Action Plan in support of the ICC. The plan identifies target countries and the presidency tasks individual member states with lobbying exercises. The UK has lobbied in the Bahamas, Barbados, Grenada, Guyana and St. Lucia as well as in Troika demarches in other countries.

The UK also looks for appropriate opportunities to raise ratification of the Rome Statute in bilateral and multilateral fora such as annual bilateral human rights talks and the recent UK/Caribbean Forum 10–12 May. We have also made clear, at various levels in the US Government, that while we understand the US concerns about the ICC, we do not share them. We hope that, over time, the court will be able to demonstrate that US concerns are unfounded and that the US will adopt a more positive approach to the ICC.

We recognise that ratification of the Rome Statute must be accompanied by the ability to implement the statue. We have funded a number of initiatives including courses, this year and last, for legal officials (mostly from Africa and Eastern Europe) involved in drafting implementing legislation, and are working with the Commonwealth Secretariat on a project to produce and disseminate model ICC implementing legislation.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many employees in his Department have *(a)* signed a formal opt out from and *(b)* are exempt from the Working Time Directive; and how many employees in his Department have recorded hours, including any accruing on a flexitime basis, in excess of the maximum allowed under the Working Time Directive in the last month for which figures are available. [178377]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: A staff survey taken earlier this year showed a total of 77 UK-based staff have signed an opt-out.

No exemptions from the Working Time Directive apply to Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) staff. The directive applies to all workers in EU countries. It does therefore apply to FCO local staff in EU countries as well as to UK-based staff. It does not apply to FCO local staff in non-EU countries. We do not keep records centrally of hours recorded in excess of the maximum allowed under the directive.

The FCO is committed to meeting the standards of the directive; line managers are responsible for ensuring that any excess hours worked are kept to an absolute minimum.

DEFENCE

Environmental Modification

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether Ministry of Defence flights adhere in all respects to the requirements of the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques. [179458]

Mr. Ingram: Yes.

Gibraltar

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether Battle of Britain memorial flight aircraft will take part in the 300th anniversary celebrations of British sovereignty in Gibraltar. [179285]

Mr. Ingram: No.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many army regiments will take part in the 300th anniversary celebrations of British sovereignty in Gibraltar; and what role they will play. [179293]

Mr. Ingram: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave on 16 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 200W.

Iraq

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many cases of death, injury or ill-treatment in Iraq have been referred to the Attorney-General or the Crown Prosecution Service for review. [179010]

Mr. Ingram: One.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his Statement of 8 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 4–5WS, on Iraq, what the names are of the individuals concerned in the cases where investigations are still in progress where individuals died. [179029]

Mr. Ingram: The names of the individuals concerned are Tanik S. Mahmud, Ather Khalaf Mohammed, Ahmed Jabber Kareem, Said Shabram, G. G. H. D. Roomi, S. Kazim, R. Z. Habib and F.T. Zaab. There are also nine cases where the identity of the individual remains unknown.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his Written Statement of 8 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 4–5WS, on Iraq, what deficiencies in the recording and investigation of civilian deaths and injuries as a result of actions by armed forces personnel were identified as a result of the verification exercise. [179034]

Mr. Ingram: No deficiencies in the recording or handling of investigations by service police have been revealed by the verification exercise. The exercise has, however, served to illustrate shortcomings in the arrangements for the central reporting of information relating to investigations into the death, injury or alleged ill-treatment of Iraqi civilians as a result of actions by UK Service Personnel.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what information he has examined in relation to the deaths of *(a)* Hazim Jum'aa Gattel Al-Skeiri, *(b)* Baha Ahmed Al-Awari, *(c)* Abbas Kuhdayar Gatteh, *(d)* Kasber Farhoud Jasim, *(e)* Laffeh Ahmed Awdeh and *(f)* Riyadh Turthi Taha Haseen. [158877]

Mr. Ingram: The deaths of the individuals named were all raised by Public Interest Lawyers and form part of the Judicial Review to be held in July and therefore it would be inappropriate to give details.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which Ministers from his Department have visited prisons run by the British coalition forces in Iraq; what the dates of the visits were; what report was made of the visit; and whether he read that report and discussed with the Minister his impressions of prison conditions in British-run prisons in Iraq. [177248]

Mr. Hoon: I visited Shaibah, the UK's only detention facility in Iraq, on 14 June. The facility is run to exacting standards to meet the requirements of the Geneva Convention. The International Committee of the Red Cross have inspected the arrangements in place and have declared them satisfactory.

Namibia

Ms Atherton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to send a fisheries protection vessel to the seas off Namibia. [179266]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence has no plans to deploy fisheries protection vessels to the seas off Namibia. This would not address the root causes of the problem. UK fisheries protection vessels are currently deployed elsewhere. We are, however, supporting the British High Commissioner in Windhoek and his Defence Attaché in developing proposals to assist Namibia with Economic Exclusion Zone management training.

RAF Menwith Hill

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans have been agreed to allow the US Third Air Force and USAFE to take responsibility for the operation of RAF Menwith Hill; and if he will make a statement. [179207]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 17 June 2004]:* There are no plans for the United States Third Air Force and USAFE to take responsibility for the operation of RAF Menwith Hill. However, discussions are taking place concerning the possible provision, by USAFE, of an administrative and logistic support unit. This will not have any impact on the current management of the base nor the mission, which will remain unchanged.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions his Department has held with the US Air Intelligence Agency about its operation of the RAF Menwith Hill Station. [179209]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 17 June 2004]:* Ministry of Defence officials work closely on a daily basis with their counterparts in the United States Air Intelligence Agency regarding the operation of RAF Menwith Hill.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he permits US forces based in the UK to hold *(a)* chemical and *(b)* biological (i) weapons and (ii) counter-weapon material. [178707]

Mr. Hoon *[holding answer 14 June 2004]:* There are no United States chemical or biological weapons held in the United Kingdom. Both the US and UK are States Parties to the 1993 Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the 1972 Biological and Toxin Weapons

Convention (BTWC). The BTWC prohibits the development, manufacture, acquisition, and stockpiling of any biological weapons.

The US is a declared possessor of chemical weapons under the terms of the CWC and is in the process of destroying its stockpiles under Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons supervision.

Both the CWC and BTWC provide for States Parties to maintain programmes to protect against chemical and biological weapons.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Free School Meals

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what advertising campaigns his Department has run since 2001 to make eligible parents aware of their child's entitlement to free school meals. [179060]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Department for Education and Skills has not run any advertising campaigns to make eligible parents aware of their child's entitlement to free school meals. My officials provide local education authorities (LEAs) with the eligibility criteria for free school meals and LEAs disseminate this information to parents and schools.

Racism (Schools)

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what instructions have been given to *(a)* local education authorities and *(b)* head teachers to ensure that children are not exposed to (i) racist opinion expressed by and (ii) policy decisions taken by elected representatives. [176829]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: There are safeguards in sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996 against politically partisan activities or teaching in schools. LEAs and schools must take reasonable steps to ensure that where political or controversial issues are covered, teachers offer pupils a balanced presentation of opposing views. Guidance for teachers from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority on teaching citizenship education, a national curriculum subject which covers these issues, has been sent to all schools. As part of local authorities, LEAs are bound by duty under the Race Relations Act (2000) to promote race equality, tackle unlawful racial discrimination and promote good race relations when carrying out all their relevant functions, even where those functions are carried out by other representatives.

Computer/Student Ratios (England)

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the computer/student ratio is for *(a)* primary, *(b)* secondary and *(c)* special schools in England, broken down by region; and if he will make a statement. [179091]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The information requested is not available centrally.

Figures for England, which were derived from a sample of schools, are shown in the table.

Average number of pupils[1] per computer (used solely or mainly for teaching and learning purposes) by type of school—England—year end March 2003

	Number
Maintained primary schools	7.9
Maintained secondary schools	5.4
Maintained special schools	3.0

[1] Full-time equivalent numbers of pupils.

The latest information on ICT in schools was published in Statistical Bulletin "Survey of information and Communications Technology in Schools 2003", which is available on the Department's website www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/.

Drug Testing

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many secondary schools conduct drug testing on pupils. [176785]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: We do not collect these data centrally.

Educational Visits (Health and Safety)

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what guidance his Department has issued to *(a)* schools and *(b)* local education authorities in relation to the health and safety of pupils on educational visits; [179103]

(2) if he will make a statement on the legal obligations and standards of care that apply to teachers participating in an educational visit. [179104]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: My Department has issued:

"Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits" (1998)

"Standards for LEAs in Overseeing Educational Visits, Standards for Adventure" and "A Handbook for Group Leaders" (2002)

"Group Safety at Water Margins" (2003)

"Swimming Charter" (2003)

Teachers must take reasonable care of their own and others' health and safety; co-operate with their employers; carry out the activities in accordance with training and instructions; and inform the employer of any serious risks. The good practice that helps teachers fulfil their statutory obligations is set out in the above documents.

Home Computers (School Pupils)

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will estimate the proportion of *(a)* primary school age and *(b)* secondary school age pupils who have home access to computers; and if he will make a statement. [179089]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The latest figures on child access to ICT at home are shown in the table. These figures are derived from the Young People and ICT 2002 survey which was a sample survey of households with children in England, carried out in September and October 2002.

Access to a computer at home by key stage of child

Position as at autumn 2002

Key stage	*Percentage*
Overall	81
Key stage 1	68
Key stage 2	79
Key stage 3	83
Key stage 4	87
Post 16	87

The full survey results have been published on the Department's website at: www.dfes.gov.uk/ictinschools/evidence/

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research he has commissioned into the link between home computer access and learning; and if he will make a statement. [179090]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department has commissioned the University of Sheffield to conduct research into children's use of ICT at home and its impact on attainment in key stage tests and GCSEs. The project commenced in December 2003 and is due to report in spring 2005.

Research shows that household access to ICT has increased significantly in recent years. Among school-age children, the effective use of ICT has been shown to have a positive effect on their learning. The ImpaCT2 research study (2002) quantified this as the equivalent of half a grade at GCSE in some subjects. The current research on pupils home use of ICT will help us to understand the relative contribution of home use of ICT to improving standards.

Honours

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much time his Department spent dealing with honours in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by civil service grade. [173037]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Between April 2003 and March 2004, the Department had the following staff dedicated to departmental honours secretariat work:

	Number
HEO	0.6
EO	1
AO	2
AA	0.8

Members of the senior civil service spent 102 hours during the year on the twice-yearly honours sift meetings.

The majority of the work on honours is undertaken by the departmental honours team. Information is not available on time spent on honours related work by departmental staff who are not members of the Department's honours team.

Official Vehicles

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of official vehicles used by his Department are run on *(a)* petrol, *(b)* diesel, *(c)* liquid petroleum gas and *(d)* compressed natural gas. [172774]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: My Department's ministerial vehicles are provided by the Government Car Service (GCS). Detailed information on the breakdown of the GCS vehicle fleet has been sent from Nick Matheson, Chief Executive of GCS, to the hon. Member on 25 May and copies of his letter will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

The following table provides a breakdown of my Department's vehicle fleet in 2003 by vehicle category and fuel type:

	2003	
	Numbers	*Percentage*
Cars		
Petrol	15	34
Diesel	24	55
LPG	5	11
Natural gas	0	0
Total	44	100
Vans < 3.5 ton		
Petrol	2	22
Diesel	7	78
LPG/natural gas	0	0
Total	9	100

Bureaucracy

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to his answer of 27 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1825W, on bureaucracy, what records he keeps of the information his Department automatically sends to schools. [179102]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Records are based on a central publications database maintained by the Communications Unit responsible for gate-keeping mailings to schools within DfES. A nominated officer maintains a control spreadsheet which details the name of documents approved for automatic mailings and the date that they were sent.

Pupil Records Transfers

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment has been made of the *(a)* cost and *(b)* inconvenience caused by the transfer of records between the schools of highly mobile children. [177790]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Assessments have not been carried out of either the cost or the inconvenience caused by the transfer of records between schools of highly mobile children.

However, the Department recognises the additional burden that high pupil mobility places on schools and we introduced the electronic Common Transfer File in 2002 to ease such demands.

The Common Transfer File is an electronic record that comprises a statutory set of information on pupils who move from one school to another. Its aim is to ensure that there is a consistent set of information

available to teachers and staff at the receiving school, thereby saving time that would be spent in re-entry of pupil information and on reassessment of the pupil. Feedback from schools on its effectiveness has been positive.

In addition, the Department is also conducting a review of the effectiveness of the Parent Held Pupil Record, which is currently used to transfer information on gypsy/traveller pupils between schools.

School Sports Days

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance his Department has issued to *(a)* schools and *(b)* local education authorities in relation to school sports days. [179105]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: This Department has issued no recent guidance to schools or local education authorities in relation to school sports days.

Schools are free to hold sports days or similar events as part of the overall package of sports opportunities which they offer their pupils. The 2003/04 PE, School Sport and Club Links survey found that 96 per cent. of the 6,547 schools taking part in the survey held a sports day or similar event during the last academic year. A copy of the results of the survey has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses of Parliament.

Sixth Form Education (Greater London)

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to encourage more students to enter sixth form education within the Greater London area. [179032]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Government are working on a number of fronts, and with a number of partners, to encourage more students into sixth form education, both in London and nationally. In London, the Government:

have set out plans through the London Challenge to introduce 15–20 new sixth form institutions—whether as free-standing sixth form colleges, in schools or as autonomous centres in FE colleges—by September 2006;

are introducing Educational Maintenance Allowances from September 2004. An evaluation of the EMA pilot found that 16-year-old participation in full time education increased by 5.9 percentage points amongst the eligible cohort, with greater increases in participation from boys and students from the lowest socio-economic groups;

are working closely with partners to ensure a coherent approach to 14–19 provision, ensuring that it is diverse and is able to support learners irrespective of their learning needs; and

are working with London's Learning and Skills Councils to help develop and implement Area Wide Inspection action plans for 14–19 provision, and a pan-London approach to Strategic Area Reviews, to ensure that the quality of provision is of the highest standard.

Under-Age Pregnancy

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps his Department takes to involve parents when under-aged pregnant girls seek the advice of a health worker at school; and if he will make a statement. [174532]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Government continue to support the provision of school-based health services where the school identifies a need. The decision to provide such services, and the content of that service, is for the individual school governing body in consultation with pupils, parents and the school community, information about the services provided should be included in the school's Sex and Relationship Education policy. The aim of school-based health services is to improve young people's access to professional advice and support on a range of health, relationship and emotional issues which may be troubling them.

For all consultations on contraception, sexual health and pregnancy the legal framework is clear. It involves assessing the young person's competence to understand the choices they are making, under guidelines established in 1986. Professionals are expected to encourage under-16s to talk to their parents and help them find ways of overcoming their apprehension. But where requested, a young person's right to confidentiality is respected unless there are serious child protection issues.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Departmental Secondments

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many staff in his Office and its agencies were seconded from the *(a)* private and *(b)* academic sector in each of the last three years. [174817]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was created on 29 May 2002.

The purpose of bringing people into the civil service from other sectors is to fill skills gaps and to provide new perspectives and insights. For the individuals themselves, the secondment provides experience of another sector and an opportunity to enhance existing skills and develop others.

From 29 May 2002 to 31 March 2003 there were 15 secondees from the private sector and three from the academic sector working in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. From 1 April 2003 until 31 March 2004 there were 13 secondees from the private sector and six secondees from the academic sector working in the Office.

Domestic Violence

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many refuge places have been available for victims of domestic violence in each of the past three years. [178812]

Yvette Cooper: There were 5,831 units as at 1 April 2003. This figure includes both accommodation in refuges and other forms of provision including floating support services where victims are supported to remain in their own accommodation where appropriate.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much Government funding was available in each of the last three years to provide refuge places for women who have experienced domestic violence. [178813]

Yvette Cooper: Revenue funding for refuge places is provided through the Supporting People initiative. Information is not readily available for 2002–03 prior to the introduction of Supporting People as funding was provided through a number of different revenue streams.

Supporting People funding is made available by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for local authorities to provide housing related support services to vulnerable people. Priorities are set locally and the proportion of the funding spent on people vulnerable due to domestic violence is a decision taken locally. When funds are spent on those who are vulnerable due to domestic violence then this does not always take the form of refuge based services. Housing related support can also be made available in other ways such as clients being visited in their own homes.

In 2003–04, £1,814,096,410 was made available and of this £57,131,302 was spent on services for people vulnerable due to domestic violence.

In 2004–05, £1,804,997,000 was made available and of this local authorities are spending £56,964,000 on services for people vulnerable due to domestic violence.

In addition, in April 2003 further measures were announced to support refuge provision through capital programmes over a three year period. In 2003–04 a total of £18.8 million funding was provided for refuge places and to improve existing, run down facilities for women who have experienced domestic violence through the Homelessness and Housing Directorate and Housing Corporation programmes. In 2004–05 and 2005–06, a total of £7.5 million has been allocated for this purpose by the Homelessness and Housing Directorate and a total of £5.8 million by the Housing Corporation.

Electoral Registration

Chris Ruane: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much each local authority electoral registration department spent per elector in England in each of the last 10 years, listed in descending order by region. [178421]

Mr. Raynsford: This information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Homelessness

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the impact prolonged stays in temporary accommodation have on homeless households' ability to access employment opportunities. [178737]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has made no assessment of the impact of temporary accommodation on the employment prospects of homeless households. However we are aware of the potentially negative impact that prolonged stays in temporary accommodation can have on homeless households employment prospects and also on their health, well being and children's education.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will be commissioning a representative survey of homeless families this autumn. This survey will identify both the prevalence of unemployment among families in temporary accommodation, and barriers to entering employment.

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will bring the rent liability for statutorily homeless households placed in temporary accommodation into line with the average rent for social housing in that local authority area. [178739]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has no plans to change rent liabilities for statutorily homeless households in temporary accommodation. However, along with the Department for Work and Pensions we are currently discussing possible alternative funding mechanisms for temporary accommodation with the Association of London Government, Greater London Authority and others.

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the London borough of Brent's decision to use some of its dedicated Homelessness Strategy funding to provide enhanced financial incentives to under-occupying tenants moving from family-sized housing to smaller accommodation. [178689]

Yvette Cooper: Homelessness grants from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister are intended to supplement core funding received in part from Revenue Support Grant and are no longer ring-fenced. Local authorities have discretion as to how they spend the grant, provided that they deliver key outcomes on homelessness. We are aware that the London borough of Brent has been offering financial incentives to under-occupying tenants moving from family sized social housing to smaller accommodation. This type of incentive can be effective in allowing households to move to smaller and more manageable accommodation. It also releases to the authority larger family accommodation of the type generally required to house homeless families. This can help local authorities in their work to avoid the use of inappropriate temporary accommodation and sustain the government's target to end the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for homeless families with children.

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his Answer of 8 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1222W, on homelessness, when he expects to publish research into homelessness among people from black and minority ethnic communities. [178688]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister commissioned research on homelessness among black and minority ethnic (BME) households in February 2003.

A draft report and guide to encourage the development of effective homelessness services for BME households has been produced and are being discussed with a selection of local authorities and other key stakeholders in order to improve the usefulness of the final document. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects a final version of the guidance to be ready for publication later this summer. Copies of both documents will be made available in the Library of the House.

Mobile Telephone Masts

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will reply to the Question tabled by the hon. Member for Meriden on 6 May, reference 172312, on mobile telephone mast sitings. [179258]

Yvette Cooper: I answered this question on 17 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 1032W.

Affordable Housing (London)

Martin Linton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many affordable homes were built under section 106 agreements by London boroughs between April 2000 and April 2004. [179203]

Keith Hill: The number of affordable homes built under section 106 agreements by London boroughs between April 2000 and March 2004 is as follows.

	Number
2000–01 (outturn)	1,106
2001–02 (outturn)	1,610
2002–03 (planned)	2,560
2003–04 (proposed)	3,917

Source:
"Housing in London 2003", Table 4.3, Greater London Authority

Ordnance Survey

Andrew Bennett: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects the framework document for the Ordnance Survey to be published. [176729]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is aware that the publication is overdue. The extended timescales reflect the importance that the Government places on the Framework Document for Ordnance Survey. We expect publication to take place before the summer recess.

Postal Voting

Mr. Evans: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will estimate extra costs incurred in preparing for postal ballots for the elections to be held on 10 June, attributable to problems with printing and distribution of ballot papers. [178283]

Mr. Raynsford: Returning officers have the contractual relationship with suppliers of ballot packs. They will be submitting claims for their costs of the all postal ballots to the Elections Claims Unit in due course. When those claims have been received, it will be possible to make an estimate of any costs falling on Returning Officers arising from any problems with printing and distribution.

Public Funding (Crosby)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much public funding from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund has been spent in Crosby. [177851]

Yvette Cooper: Projects of the value of £13,282,807 and which benefit Crosby and other neighbourhoods in the South Sefton area of Merseyside are currently being funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF).

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much public funding has been spent from the Community Participation programmes in Crosby. [177852]

Yvette Cooper: The Community Participation Programmes (Community Empowerment Fund, Community Learning Chest and Community Chests) provide funds for the 88 most deprived local authority areas in England. Crosby falls within Sefton , which is one of these areas.

Community Participation funds are always provided directly to a community or voluntary sector organisation in each of the 88 areas. The Community Empowerment Fund is used to develop and support a Community Empowerment Network (CEN) helping to facilitate community and voluntary sector involvement in the LSP, especially in the most deprived neighbourhoods and hard-to-reach groups. The Community Chest and Learning Chests provide small grants to support a wide range of community activities and to develop the skills and knowledge of local communities so that they can participate in Neighbourhood Renewal at a local level.

The organisation that administers the Community Empowerment Fund is Sefton Council for Voluntary Service and the Community Foundation for Merseyside administers Community Chest and Community Learning Chests. These organisations identify and agree spending priorities with the Community Empowerment Network and other VCS stakeholders, which is then approved by the Government Office.

The total Community Participation grant allocation for Sefton over three years (2001–04) is £1,215,434. This financial year (2004–05) the grant allocation for Sefton will be £551,064.

Public Perceptions (Surveys)

Norman Lamb: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what surveys of public perceptions of his Department and of its areas of responsibility have taken place over the last 12 months; what the *(a)* title and *(b)* nature of these surveys was; what the findings of each survey were; where these findings have been published; what the cost of such surveys was; and if he will make a statement and place copies of the surveys in the Library. [176943]

Yvette Cooper: No surveys of public perceptions of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and its areas of responsibility have taken place over the last 12 months.

Radon Gas

Ms Atherton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what action he intends to take to tackle radon in Cornish homes. [179461]

Phil Hope: Radon is classed as a contaminant and is dealt with under Part C of the Building Regulations. I expect to make an announcement shortly on improvements to Part C.

Government have provided guidance on radon protection of new homes since the late 1980s. The current guidance, BRE report BR211, "Radon: guidance on protection measures for new dwellings," was last revised in 1999 following the results of a survey of radon levels in all homes in England and Wales. This survey was carried out by the National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) and was published in 1996.

Temporary Housing

Chris Ruane: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the cost of providing temporary housing was to each local authority in each of the past 20 years, expressed at today's prices. [178429]

Yvette Cooper: The amount reported by local authorities in England as being spent on homelessness from the General Fund Revenue Account for each year from 1987–88 to 2003–04 expressed at 2003–04 prices is tabled as follows. This includes expenditure on homelessness including temporary accommodation, private sector leasing and bed and breakfast accommodation.

It is not possible to give figures for expenditure on temporary accommodation from the Housing Revenue Account as this is not recorded separately.

General Fund Revenue Account net current expenditure on homelessness at 2003–04 prices

	£ million
1987–88	209.1
1988–89	183.3
1989–90	141.7
1990–91	148.1
1991–92	152.0
1992–93	167.9
1993–94	140.8
1994–95	139.9
1995–96	143.3
1996–97	142.0
1997–98	142.5
1998–99	169.7
1999–2000	189.5
2000–01	218.0
2001–02	198.0
2002–03	203.0
2003–04	220.5

The figures have been revalued for previous years at 2003–04 prices using the current Her Majesty's Treasury GDP deflators.

Figures for the individual local authorities for each year from 1998–99 have been made available in the Library of the house. Individual figures for earlier years are not available.

Urban Regeneration

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what funding has been allocated to the Single Regeneration Budget for financial year *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2005–06, broken down by region; and what funding plans are in place to continue the work of the Single Regeneration Budget from 2005–06 onwards. [178108]

Yvette Cooper: The Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) was subsumed into the Regional Development Agencies' Single Programme in April 2002 and remaining expenditure from SRB commitments will be funded from the Single Programme. Information on the level of SRB commitments is not separately collected. Funding for the RDAs' Single Programme is made up from contributions from a number of different Government Departments. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's contribution to the Single Programme is £1,524 million (outturn) for 2003–04 and £1,513 million (planned) for 2005–06. RDAs are continuing to fund regeneration activity from the Single Programme. Funding for all programmes, including those of the RDAs, from 2005–06 is being considered in the 2004 Spending Review.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Afghanistan

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the level of private sector investment in Afghanistan has been in each of the last three years. [176605]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: This information is not collected by HMG and there would be a disproportionate cost to obtain the information.

Corus

Denzil Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make ex gratia payments to Mr. Paul Thomas and Mr. David Morgan, former employees of Corus, whose cases have been the subject of correspondence with her Department. [178114]

Jacqui Smith: I am aware that Mr. Thomas has pressed for payment, for himself and Mr Morgan, under the Iron and Steel Employees Re-adaptation Benefits Scheme (ISERBS) which permits us to make payments to redundant steelworkers under the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) Treaty. ISERBS was introduced in 2001 and ECSC rules permitted the scheme to be backdated to include steelworkers made redundant since January 2000. Mr. Morgan and Mr. Thomas were made redundant in 1999. The Government are not able to make ex gratia payments to individuals who do not qualify under the scheme rules.

Export Credits Guarantee Department

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many staff have been seconded from the private sector to the Export Credits Guarantee Department in the last 10 years, stating in each case *(a)* the companies from which they have been seconded and *(b)* the start and end dates of the secondment. [176444]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Four people have been seconded to ECGD from the private sector in the last 10 years. They came respectively from:

Barclays Bank plc between October 1989 and January 1993;

British Aerospace for 15 working days over the period June to September 1993;

HSBC between January 1996 and December 1997; and NatWest Bank between July 1997 and February 1999.

Internet Telephony

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the implications for the telecoms sector of the increasing use of internet telephony. [178716]

Mr. Timms: New services that can offer consumers lower prices and advanced features are welcome additions to a competitive telecommunications market. Ofcom, the telecommunications and broadcasting regulator, is currently considering the regulatory issues concerning voice over broadband (VoB) services as part of a wider strategic review of telecommunications. It has also consulted on specific issues such as numbering arrangements and runs a VoB industry group.

The Ofcom Strategic Review of Telecommunications can be found at: http://www.ofcom.org.uk/static/telecoms_review/index.htm

Details of the VoB industry group can be found at: http://www.ofcom.org.uK/ind_groups/ind_groups/telecommunications/vob/?a=87101

Kismet Road Project

Mr. Sayeed: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the withdrawal by Advantage West Midlands of agreed funding for the Kismet Road project; and what assessment she has made of the effect on companies which have incurred costs as a result. [177206]

Jacqui Smith: Advantage West Midlands received an application for funding for the Kismet Road project but was unable to make an offer of support.

Any funding given by Advantage West Midlands is subject to a formal appraisal process. Early on in the appraisal process, it became clear that Advantage West Midlands could not fund the project because there were irreconcilable anomalies and inconsistencies within the application's proposed funding package and the project offered no acceptable outputs. That decision was communicated to the applicant at the earliest opportunity.

Ministerial Travel

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) if she will list the travel costs incurred *(a)* by her Department and *(b)* by each Minister within her Department, for each of the last 10 years; [175646]

(2) how many journeys were made by helicopter by each Minister in her Department in each of the last 10 years; and what the journey length was in each case. [175740]

Ms Hewitt: In respect of overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The Government have also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Libraries of the House. These reports contain information reaching back from 1995–06. Information for earlier years could be obtained only at disproportionate cost and in some cases will no longer be held. Information for 2003–04 will be published in due course.

For domestic travel the DTI has devolved to the local management the authorisation of travel claims for its staff, subject to checking procedures. It does not record the costs of taxis, train travel, helicopters or airline tickets used by staff separately. To obtain accurate data for the information requested would entail disproportionate cost.

All ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code of Practice.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much her Department spent on ministerial travel by *(a)* car, *(b)* train, *(c)* aeroplane and *(d)* helicopter, in each of the last 10 years. [175663]

Ms Hewitt: For part *(a)* of the question my hon. Friend the Minister of the Cabinet Office has asked Nick Matheson, Chief executive of the Government Car and despatch Agency to write to the hon. Member with details of the cost of ministerial vehicles provided to this Department.

For parts *(b) (c) (d)* the DTI has devolved to the local management the authorisation of travel claims for its staff, subject to checking procedures. It does not record the costs of taxis, train travel, helicopters or airline tickets used by staff separately. To obtain accurate data for the information requested would entail disproportionate cost.

All ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code of Practice.

Nirex

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will give an assurance that the Government's intentions on the future role of Nirex will be made public before the Energy Bill completes its passage through the House. [177224]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* The Government are working hard to determine the future of Nirex and my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Environment, Food an Rural Affairs will announce the outcome of its review as soon as it has been completed. I am not as yet able to give a firm date for the announcement.

Ruth Lea

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions the Permanent Secretary of the Department has had concerning Ruth Lea while she was employed by the Institute of Directors; and if she will make a statement. [179106]

Ms Hewitt: The details of meetings held internally between officials, or privately between officials and third parties, are exempt from disclosure under exemptions 2 and 14 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information, protecting internal discussion and information given in confidence respectively.

Secondments

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many staff in her Department and its agencies were seconded from the *(a)* private and *(b)* academic sector in each of the last three years. [174822]

Ms Hewitt: The purpose of bringing people into the Civil Service from other sectors is to fill skills gaps and to add external dimensions and insights. For the individuals themselves, the secondment provides experience of another sector and an opportunity to enhance existing skills and develop others.

The following table shows the secondments from *(a)* the private sector and *(b)* the academic sector for the last three years:

	Secondments from the private sector	*Secondments from the academic sector*
2001–02	72	3
2002–03	64	1
2003–04	57	3

Letter from Claire Clancy to Mr. Bob Spink, dated 18 June 2004:

I am responding to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on behalf of Companies House, which is an Executive Agency of the DTI.

Companies House has not seconded any individuals from either the private or academic sector in the last three years.

Letter from Desmond Flynn to Mr. Bob Spink, dated 18 June 2004:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply to you directly on behalf of The Insolvency Service in respect of your question (2003/3107) asking how many staff in its agencies were seconded from the *(a)* private and *(b)* academic sector in each of the last three years.

The Insolvency Service seconded one member of staff from the private sector during the last three years. The secondment ended in August 2001.

Sellafield

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she expects Sellafield's new mixed oxide plant to become fully operational. [178760]

Mr. Timms: The Sellafield MOX Plant (SMP) is currently manufacturing Mixed Oxide Fuel (MOX) as part of the final stages of commissioning the plant. Formal consent to operate SMP will be sought from the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate (Nil), the regulatory body in late 2005, subject to the plant achieving its manufacturing schedule.

Sickness Absence

Denzil Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many days were lost in her Department through sickness absence in the year ending 31 March 2004. [178344]

Ms Hewitt: In the year 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004, the headquarters of the Department of Trade and Industry (including Small Business Service and UK Trade and Investment) lost 30,910 days due to sick absence. These figures include weekend days where absences span the weekend.

The figures can be further broken down to show that 21,184 of these days were certified and 9,726 were uncertified.

Southampton Port

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she is taking to support the competitive position of the port of Southampton. [175577]

Jacqui Smith: It is for the Port of Southampton to determine their own future investment needs in discussion with the appropriate authorities. The Government through the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) would be keen to work with the port to develop its future strategy.

Surveys

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what surveys of public perceptions of her Department and of its areas of responsibility have taken place over the last 12 months; what the *(a)* title and *(b)* nature of these surveys was; what the findings of each survey were; where these findings have been published; what the cost of such surveys was; and if she will make a statement and place copies of the surveys in the Library. [176948]

Ms Hewitt: My department commissions surveys from time to time of customers' views of its services so as to help improve those services. Recent examples over the last 12 months include:

"Fair Markets Stakeholder Survey"

"Survey of DTI Customers in the Business Relations and Energy Group Areas"

DTI has received some initial findings from these surveys, but the full reports are not yet ready for publication. However, early indications from the survey of DTI's Fair Markets stakeholders include that DTI was rated highly on effective stakeholder engagement, with professional and competent staff who are good at delivering on strategy and policy. Comments suggest that we could improve our consultations by engaging stakeholders earlier and providing feedback after each consultation.

The total combined costs of these surveys were approximately £60,000.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many employees in her Department have *(a)* signed a formal opt out from and *(b)* are exempt from the Working Time Directive; and how many employees in her Department have recorded hours, including any accruing on a flexitime basis, in excess of the maximum allowed under the Working Time Directive in the last month for which figures are available. [178372]

Ms Hewitt: Formal opt-out forms from the Working Time Directive and flexitime forms are held at local management level and are not readily available centrally.

DTI does not collect data on those who are exempt from the Working Time Directive, as all DTI employees are covered by the Regulations.

Yumi Yet Bridge

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the Export Credits Guarantee Department has been approached for support for Phase 2 of the Yumi Yet Bridge Development Programme in Papua New Guinea. [177600]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 8 June 2004]:* For reasons of commercial confidentiality, ECGD does not normally reveal details of applications for cover it receives in respect of prospective export transactions.

Nevertheless, in this instance, Mabey and Johnson Ltd. has agreed to ECGD disclosing that it has applied for cover in respect of Phase 2 of the Yumi Yet Bridge Programme in PNG.

However ECGD has not yet taken a decision on whether to provide cover for this follow on business.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Autistic Spectrum Disorders

Mrs. Browning: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what criteria are set for doctors and psychiatrists who offer themselves as expert witnesses on autistic spectrum disorders. [178959]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 15 June 2004]:* In criminal law, where matters fall outside the ordinary knowledge of the court, the court may allow the opinions of an expert witness to be admitted as evidence. If either the prosecution or the defence wishes to adduce the evidence of an expert witness, they are obliged to disclose the expert's statement to the other side in advance of the trial. The other side may then request further details from the expert. This obligation also allows the other side sufficient time to prepare their arguments if they wish to challenge the expert witness.

The decision whether or not to allow the evidence of an expert witness to be admitted rests with the court, which must be satisfied that the material comes within a recognized field of expertise and that the witness is indeed an expert in that field. It is for the jury to decide what weight ought to be placed on any expert evidence that has been admitted.

One exception to these general rules is that, under the Criminal Procedure (Insanity and Unfitness to Plead) Act 1991, a defendant shall not be acquitted on the grounds of insanity, or found unfit to plead, except on the evidence of two or more registered medical practitioners, at least one of whom is approved by the Secretary of State as having special experience in the diagnosis or treatment of mental disorder.

Protection from Harassment Act

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what the total number of restraining orders made under section 5 of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 after a conviction under section 2 of the Act was in *(a)* 2001, *(b)* 2002 and *(c)* 2003, broken down by sex of the defendant; [159393]

(2) what the total number of restraining orders made under section 5 of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 after a conviction under section 4 of the Act was in *(a)* 2001, *(b)* 2002 and *(c)* 2003, broken down by sex of the defendant; [159394]

(3) what the total number of applications alleging a breach of a section 5 of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 restraining order resulting in a conviction was in *(a)* 2001, *(b)* 2002 and *(c)* 2003, broken down by gender; [159395]

(4) what the total number of applications alleging a breach of a section 5 of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 restraining order resulting in an acquittal was, broken down by gender, in *(a)* 2001, *(b)* 2002 and *(c)* 2003; [159396]

(5) how many magistrates, court and Crown court prosecutions under section 4 of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 resulted in *(a)* conviction and *(b)* acquittal in (i) 2001, (ii) 2002 and (iii) 2003, broken down by sex of defendant. [159399]

Paul Goggins: Table A shows the number of persons sentenced to a restraining order following a conviction for an offence under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, sections 2 and 4 at all courts in England and Wales during 2001 and 2002.

Table A: Number of persons sentenced to a restraining order after being found guilty of an offence under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, sections 2 or 4, all courts, England and Wales, 2001 and 2002

Statute	*Offence description*	*Year*	*Sex*	*Sentenced to a restraining order*[1]
Protection from Harassment Act 1997, Section 2	Offence of harassment	2001	Male	1,057
			Female	147
			Total	1,204
		2002	Male	1,235
			Female	146
			Total	1,381
Protection from Harassment Act 1997, Section 4	Putting people in fear of violence	2001	Male	141
			Female	9
			Total	150
		2002	Male	192
			Female	13
			Total	205

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis (but including primary and secondary disposals).

Table B shows the number of persons acquitted or found guilty at all courts of the offence of breaching a restraining order under section 5 of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, in England and Wales during 2001 and 2002.

Table B: Number of persons acquitted or convicted of breaching a restraining order under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, section 5, at all courts, England and Wales 2001 and 2002[1]

Statute	Offence description	Year	Sex	Acquitted[2]	Found guilty
Protection from Harassment Act 1997, Section 5	Breach of restraining order	2001	Male	57	501
			Female	6	38
			Total	63	539
		2002	Male	59	556
			Female	7	48
			Total	66	604

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.
[2] Charge dismissed at magistrates' courts.

Table C shows the number of persons acquitted or found guilty at both magistrates' courts and the Crown Court of offences under sections 2 and 4 of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, in England and Wales during 2001 and 2002.

Table: C Number of persons acquitted or found guilty of offences under sections 2 and 4 of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, England and Wales 2001 to 2002[1]

Statute	Offence description	Year	Sex	Magistrates' courts		The Crown court	
				Charge dismissed	Found guilty	Acquitted	Found guilty
Protection from Harassment Act 1997, Section 2	Offence of harassment	2001	Male	372	2,377	18	98
			Female	65	320	4	11
			Total	437	2,697	22	109
		2002	Male	411	2,422	14	107
			Female	71	328	5	6
			Total	482	2,750	19	113
Protection from Harassment Act 1997, Section 4	Putting people in fear of violence	2001	Male	84	371	91	178
			Female	11	32	13	9
			Total	95	403	104	187
		2002	Male	73	376	86	223
			Female	7	26	11	13
			Total	80	402	97	236

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.

Statistics on court proceedings for 2003 will be published in the Autumn of this year.

Animal Experiments

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent research he has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated to assess whether experiments on animals can be scientifically reproduced using other methods and subjects. [176778]

Caroline Flint: The Home Office has not commissioned or evaluated any formal research to demonstrate that experiments on animals cannot be scientifically reproduced using other methods and subjects, and has no plans to do so. Instead, the assessment of project licence applications under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 focuses on these issues on a case by case basis. Under the 1986 Act, the use of animals in regulated procedures is prohibited where a scientifically valid, non-animal alternative is available.

Burials

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures have been introduced by the Government in response to the shortage of space for further burials in cemeteries and graveyards. [178715]

Paul Goggins: The Government are aware of concerns over the potential lack of appropriate burial space, particularly within built up urban areas. The current public consultation exercise "Burial law and policy in the 21st Century: the need for a sensitive and sustainable approach" seeks views on the existing arrangements for providing cemeteries and the on the possibility of re-using old ones. The results of this exercise, which is part of the on-going review of burial law and ends on 13 July 2004, will help to inform the Government's decision on how best to proceed.

Corporate Killing

Judy Mallaber: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he plans to publish a Bill on corporate killing. [178226]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 15 June 2004]:* The Government are firmly committed to reforming the law on corporate manslaughter. We plan to publish a draft Bill before the end of the current session.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter to him dated 10 May from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mr. S. Nyathi. [178949]

Mr. Blunkett: I wrote to my right hon. Friend on 17 June 2004.

Crime Victims/Witnesses (Crosby)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the residents of Crosby have benefited from the national strategy to improve services for witnesses and victims of crime. [177949]

Paul Goggins: Criminal Justice Boards have been established in each of the 42 criminal justice areas in England and Wales and their work includes delivering the Government's Public Service Agreement targets to bring more offences to justice, improve public confidence in the Criminal Justice System and increase victim and witness satisfaction.

Every Criminal Justice Board has produced a plan to improve services to victims and witnesses.

As part of the No Witness, No Justice programme, Witness Care Units are being established in every criminal justice area to provide a single point of contact for victims and witnesses. The provisional dates for rollout in Merseyside are between 1 April and 1 October 2005.

In February 2004, the first pilot to help vulnerable witnesses of crime with communication difficulties to give evidence was launched in Merseyside.

The Home Office is funding three pilots to test out the best approach to supporting victims of road traffic incidents. Aftermath Support, in Merseyside is one of these schemes and is provided by local partners.

Criminal Justice Interventions Programme

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what relationship the National Offender Management Service will have to the Criminal Justice Interventions Programme; and who will allocate staffing to Criminal Justice Interventions Programmes from within the National Offender Management Service management structure. [174461]

Paul Goggins: The Criminal Justice Interventions Programme is a critical part of the Government's national strategy for tackling drugs. Its implementation is being phased and delivery at a local level is through community-based Criminal Justice Integrated Teams (CJITs) which adopt a case management approach to offer access to drug treatment and support for drug misusing offenders.

With the creation of the National Offender Management Service we envisage that the drugs case manager will be the link to and, in some cases, the provider of drug treatment services. The Regional Offender Manager will be responsible for ensuring proper links are established within his or her region between offender managers and CJITs. This will avoid duplication and ensure a fully integrated package of support and management to drug misusing offenders before, during and after sentence.

Domestic Violence

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action the Government is taking on domestic violence other than imprisonment of offenders. [176814]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 10 June 2004]:* Domestic violence is a horrific crime, which claims the lives of around two women a week. This Government is determined to tackle it.

The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Bill is the biggest overhaul of domestic violence legislation for thirty years. It is a key part of the Government's aim of putting victims at the heart of the criminal justice system and part of our wider domestic violence strategy to protect and support victims, as well as bringing perpetrators to justice.

A broad range of other initiatives are being taken forward by the Inter-Ministerial Group on Domestic Violence. These initiatives include important developments in health, education and housing as well as the civil and criminal justice systems. This year we are investing £56.97 million on domestic violence services as part of the Supporting People Program. Following a positive evaluation of the effectiveness of five specialist domestic violence courts in what further action we can take to improve Court Services for victims of domestic violence.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many women have been killed by *(a)* intimate partners and *(b)* family members in incidents in each of the last five years for which statistics are available; and in how many of these cases children were also killed. [178354]

Paul Goggins: The latest available information on homicide is published in Home Office Statistical Bulletin number 01/04, "Crime in England and Wales 2002/2003: Supplementary Volume 1: Homicide and Gun Crime". It provides information on gender of victims and relationship of victim to suspect. The Bulletin does not identify individual cases where children were also killed.

For England and Wales, the available information on women homicide victims killed by partners/ex-partners and others known to them is given in the table.

	Partner/ex-partner	*Other known*[1]
1998–99	76	82
1999–2000	88	55
2000–01	98	76
2001–02	120	64
2002–03	107	85

[1] Other known includes relationships of victim to principal suspect of son/daughter, parent, other family, friend and acquaintance.

Note:

Figures are as at 13 November 2003 and are subject to revision as cases are dealt with by the police, by the courts or as further information becomes available.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the performance indicators against which he plans to measure the *(a)* medium and *(b)* long-term success of his domestic violence strategy. [178817]

Paul Goggins: We intend to measure the effectiveness of our domestic violence strategy over the medium and long term using the following indicators:

Homicides as a result of domestic violence;

Headline prevalence of domestic violence (as measured by the British Crime Survey Inter-Personal Violence module);

Numbers of *(a)* young people and *(b)* all people who think that violence is acceptable in some circumstances;

Percentage of domestic violence incidents with a power of arrest where an arrest was made related to incident and, of this, the percentage of partner-on-partner violence (within the Policing Performance Assessment Framework).

A new indicator covering rates of attrition in domestic violence;

The number of civil orders made;

A new Best Value Performance Indicator designed to assess the overall effectiveness of local authority services to domestic violence victims. This will shortly go out for consultation with local authorities, and it part of a suite of indicators which will be piloted in the autumn and introduced in April 2005;

An indicator relating to victim satisfaction with the support they have received from key agencies.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what easy-to-understand guidance he has issued for practitioners on the sharing of personal information where domestic violence is *(a)* suspected and *(b)* disclosed to them. [178818]

Paul Goggins: The Home Office Development and Practice Report 30, "Safety and justice: sharing personal information in the context of domestic violence—an overview", was published at the National Victims Conference on 28 April 2004.

The report, which was endorsed by the Information Commissioner and by the Inter-Ministerial Group on Domestic Violence, provides an introduction to responsible and lawful sharing of personal and sensitive information between practitioners in domestic violence contexts in England and Wales. It also demonstrates that sharing personal and sensitive information can be done in a legal, pragmatic and straightforward way. We have also developed a web-based tool to accompany the report. This can be accessed at www.crimereduction.gov.uk.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many calls there have been to the domestic violence hotline in each month since its introduction. [178865]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

There have been 26,070 calls to the national domestic violence helpline (0808 2000 247) jointly operated by Refuge and Women's Aid between its launch on 15 December 2003 and 15 June 2004. In addition, Women's Aid have received 42,691 calls on their previous help-line number, and Refuge 43,890 calls on their previous numbers. A monthly breakdown of these figures is given as follows.

Calls made to the national domestic violence helpline

	Number
December 2003	1,345
January 2004	3,382
February 2004	3,654
March 2004	5,933

Calls made to the national domestic violence helpline

	Number
April 2004	3,956
May 2004	4,098
June 2004	3,702

Driving Offences

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were sent to prison for causing death by dangerous driving in each of the last three years. [178682]

Paul Goggins: The information for England and Wales for the years 2000 to 2002 is contained in the table. Data for 2003 will not be available until the autumn.

Persons sentenced to immediate custody[1] at all courts for causing death by dangerous driving[2], England and Wales 2000 to 2002

	Total[3]
2000	166
2001	193
2002	199

[1] Includes unsuspended imprisonment, detention under sec90/92(PCC(S))A2000), detention in a young offender institution and detention and training orders.

[2] An offence under the Road Traffic Act 1988 s.1 as added by the Road Traffic Act 1991 s.1.

[3] These data are on the principal offence basis.

Firearms

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans his Department has to review procedures governing the use of firearms by the police. [176268]

Caroline Flint: There are no plans to further review procedures governing the use of firearms by police. The Code of Practice on the Police Use of Firearms and Less Lethal Weapons, which was published in December 2003, sets out the basic principles in relation to the selection, testing, acquisition and use of firearms and less lethal weapons by police. The Association of Chief Police Officers also issue a detailed manual of guidance to police forces.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many incidents resulting in *(a)* fatalities, *(b)* serious injuries and *(c)* minor injuries have occurred (i) in miniature rifle ranges exempted from certification or involving weapons linked to such ranges and (ii) on theatrical, film and television productions under present exemptions or involving weapons held under such exemptions in each of the last 10 years. [177467]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 9 June 2004]:* Information available centrally relates only to recorded crimes resulting in injury or death and in any event does not record the location where the injury was sustained.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many offences there were involving shotgun cartridges or components derived from them

other than in the circumstance of a crime where a shotgun itself is discharged in each of the last 10 years. [177468]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 9 June 2004]:* The information requested is not collected centrally.

FRANK Communications Campaign (Corby)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the FRANK communications campaign has benefited the residents of Crosby. [177938]

Caroline Flint: Crosby sits under the Sefton Drug Action Team (DAT) area. This DAT, in partnership with local agencies, has used the FRANK campaign materials to communicate to the local population on drug and community safety issues. These have been used in schools, pupil referral units, colleges and youth centres throughout the DAT area inclusive of Crosby. In addition, 120,000 homes in Crosby will be sent information in the next few weeks about the FRANK 24 hour helpline, website and email service, in a community safety magazine commissioned by Merseyside police. Local data are not available, but nationally there have been over 1.5 million visits to the website and over 425,000 calls to the helpline.

Funeral Rites

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people in the UK chose to have their mortal remains *(a)* cremated, *(b)* buried and *(c)* otherwise disposed of in each year since 1997 (i) in total and (ii) expressed as a percentage of all deaths per year. [178714]

Paul Goggins: This information is not collected centrally. The number of cremations in recent years has levelled at just over 70 per cent. (72 per cent. of 612,000 deaths in 2002). All other deaths are dealt with by burial or by other means (eg repatriation of the body out of England) and these details are not held centrally.

Holloway Prison

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many incidents involving self harm there have been in Holloway Prison in each of the past three years. [178575]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 14 June2004]:* The information requested is provided in the following table:

Holloway Prison

	Number of recorded incidents of self-harm (not the number of individuals)
2001	542
2002	765
2003	[1]851

[1] In December 2002, a new form for reporting self-injury (the F213SH) was introduced across the prisons estate in England and Wales, which is known to have improved reporting practices. Much of the increase in reported self-harm in 2003 may result from the change in reporting procedures rather than reflect an actual increase in incidence of self-harm.

Women prisoners will benefit from a specifically targeted and separate suicide prevention and self-harm management strategy being developed for them. This draws upon specialist knowledge of suicidal and self-harming behaviour among women prisoners, and builds upon a number of interventions including: individual crisis counselling for women prisoners who self-harm; the continued development and evaluation of dialectical behaviour therapy, which is currently being trialled at Durham, Bullwood Hall and Holloway prisons; investment and planning to ensure progress on the detoxification strategy in women's prisons; and the introduction of a new training pack for all staff working with women in custody, which includes a module on the health and well-being of women prisoners. A total of £1 million from the Department of Health has been allocated to women's prisons to be spent on the recruitment of psychiatric nurses.

Juvenile Offenders

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will place in the Library a copy of the guidelines issued to prisons wishing to apply for late release of juveniles. [176783]

Paul Goggins: Late release provides a sanction where a young person subject to a Detention and Training Order (DTO) has been violent, dangerous or destructive while in custody, or has consistently failed to co-operate or to take responsibility for his or her behaviour. Applications for late release require the approval of a court.

No specific guidance has been issued on the procedure for applying for late release. The introduction in May 2002 of presumptive early release with electronic monitoring provided an alternative sanction in many cases, in that DTO trainees who exhibit a pattern of bad behaviour can be required to remain in custody to the end of the first part of their Order. We are currently reviewing policy on late release in the light of establishments' experience, particularly over the two years since electronically monitored early release was made available.

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many times each prison has applied for the late release of a juvenile prisoner in each of the last five years. [176786]

Paul Goggins: Section 102(5) of the Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000 enables a youth court, on application from the Secretary of State, to order that a young person serving a Detention and Training Order (DTO) of eight months or more should be released one month after the half-way point of the Order. (A young person serving 18 or 24 months can, alternatively, be ordered to be released two months after the half-way point.)

The following table shows late release applications by Young Offender Institutions (YOIs) in the period beginning with the introduction of the DTO on 1 April 2000 up until 31 May 2004.

YOI	Late release applications	Approved	Awaiting court hearing
Ashfield	0	—	—
Brinsford	4	3	1
Castlington	0	—	—
Feltham	0	—	—
Hindley	0	—	—
Huntercombe	0	—	—
Lancaster farms	3	3	—
Onley	0	—	—
Parc	0	—	—
Stoke Heath	3	1	—
Thorn Cross	0	—	—
Warren Hill	0	—	—
Werrington	0	—	—
Wetherby	0	—	—
Brockhill	0	—	—
Bullwood Hall	0	—	—
Eastwood Park	0	—	—
New Hall	0	—	—

National Offender Management Service

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the all-Wales probation board will be organised at a local level in the new National Offender Management Service. [175781]

Paul Goggins: While the precise arrangements in Wales have not yet been agreed, the National Offender Management Service will ensure that effective links with bodies such as Local Criminal Justice Boards, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, Drug Action Teams and local authorities, are maintained and developed. All Regional Offender Managers—including the offender manager for Wales—will be required to establish these links within their region and develop other community and neighbourhood networks as appropriate.

Police (Specialist Skills)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many police officers are trained to handle digital evidence; [178503]

(2) how many police officers are *(a)* serving with computer crime units and *(b)* have higher level forensic skills. [178504]

Caroline Flint: The allocation of officers to computer crime units and the training of officers in these and other units in forensic investigation skills is a matter for individual chief officers. There are no centrally aggregated figures of these resources.

However, every police force in England and Wales has expertise in the recovery and analysis of forensic evidence. These skills are utilised in a variety of investigations. With regards to training officers who are not part of specialist units, there is a module included in the probationary training for all new police officers covering the internet and new technology. Centrex are also developing an online training package for existing officers.

This month the Home Office has produced tactical guidance for managers of computer crime units within forces, which includes advice on running these units and practical guidance on procedures and tools for forensic analysis.

Prison Staff

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received from the Prison Officers' Association regarding proposed changes to the uniform worn by staff in young offender institutions. [173396]

Paul Goggins: The Prison Officers' Association has objected formally to a Prison Service proposal to introduce a more relaxed style of uniform in establishments holding juveniles. Discussions to resolve the disagreement are continuing.

Prisoners

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* women and *(b)* men were being held in prison on 12 March; how many prisoners were released on early release on 12 March; how many prisoners were eligible for early release on 12 March; and how many prisoners were released on 12 March. [162199]

Paul Goggins: On 12 March 2004 there were 4,569 females and 70,451 males being held in Prison Service establishments in England and Wales. There were an estimated 175 prisoners with a sentence length of three months to less than four years whose Home Detention Curfew (HDC) eligibility date was 12 March 2004. On that date, 77 prisoners were actually released on HDC.

Some prisoners with a sentence length of three months to less than four years do not quality for HDC because of the nature of their current or previous offences.

In addition, the figure of 175 will exclude a small number of prisoners in the population who were on remand at the time of the count, but were subsequently sentenced to a custodial sentence suitable for HOC and whose HOC eligibility date falls on 12 March 2004. This occurs when they have spent a significant period on remand.

A further 623 prisoners were discharged by other means on 12 March 2004, not including discharges following recall after release on licence, fine defaulters and non-criminals.

Prisons

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many life sentence prisoners have been released on parole in each month since January 1995. [171248]

Paul Goggins: Release details for all life sentence prisoners are only available in the monthly format requested from 1 April 2000 onwards. Information for the period 1995–99 is available only by calendar year.

The annual release figures for the calendar years 1995–99 are as follows.

	Number (first time releases only)
1995	92
1996	85
1997	98
1998	98
1999	122

The release details from 1 April 2000 onwards are shown in the table.

Releases on life licence April 2000—March 2004

Month	Year	Number of releases
April	[1]2000	8
May	[1]2000	13
June	[1]2000	19
July	[1]2000	13
August	[1]2000	4
September	[1]2000	7
October	[1]2000	8
November	[1]2000	6
December	[1]2000	4
January	[1]2001	16
February	[1]2001	14
March	[1]2001	13
April	2001	25
May	2001	12
June	2001	14
July	2001	11
August	2001	17
September	2001	9
October	2001	18
November	2001	15
December	2001	10
January	2002	10
February	2002	13
March	2002	10
April	2002	12
May	2002	17
June	2002	12
July	2002	22
August	2002	26
September	2002	14
October	2002	26
November	2002	14
December	2002	18
January	2003	18
February	2003	28
March	2003	29
April	2003	18
May	2003	30
June	2003	22
July	2003	38
August	2003	32
September	2003	22

[1] Relates to first time release cases only. Subsequent data includes cases where prisoners have been re-released following recall from life licence.

Releases on life licence April 2000—March 2004

Month	Year	Number of releases
October	2003	40
November	2003	15
December	2003	30
January	2004	15
February	2004	31
March	2004	38

The lifer population in June 1995 stood at just under 3,300 and has risen at roughly 8 per cent. per year to the current level of over 5,500. This increase in population has been reflected in the number of lifer cases considered each year by the independent Parole Board and in the number of cases where release was recommended (or directed) by panels. Following the European Court of Human Rights judgment in the case of Stafford in May 2002, the Parole Board is now responsible for the release of all tariff expired lifers, including mandatory lifers.

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reason the Prison Service uses Contracted Supplementary Hours rather than ex-gratia payments to cover for staff shortfalls. [178404]

Paul Goggins: Contracted Supplementary Hours is a contracted agreement between management and staff for working additional hours, allowing advance planning of attendance patterns to cover periods of staff shortfall. For this purpose, Contracted Supplementary Hours are used in place of ex-gratia payments, which are primarily one-off payments to cover individual circumstances in unforeseen cases of operational emergency.

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the cost-effectiveness of the Contracted Supplementary Hours scheme to cover for staff shortfalls in the Prison Service. [178405]

Paul Goggins: The Contracted Supplementary Hours scheme was introduced to provide prison governors with the flexibility to provide immediate additional working hours to meet operational needs. Since it has been in operation for the majority of prisons for just over a year, no assessment has yet been made on the cost-effectiveness of the scheme in covering staff shortfalls in the Prison Service.

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the relative cost-effectiveness and flexibility of ex-gratia payments in covering for staff shortfalls. [178406]

Paul Goggins: Ex-gratia payments provide flexibility in individual circumstances for unforeseen cases of operational emergency. In view of the unpredictable nature of these payments, it would be very difficult to draw generalised conclusions about them. Hence, no assessment has been made to date of their cost-effectiveness.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average ratio of prisoners to wardens was in *(a)* privately and *(b)* publicly run prisons in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by category. [177846]

Paul Goggins: The information is as follows:

Contracted prisons[1]

Category	Ratio for the number of prisoners to prison custody officers[2]
Category B	3.97
Category C	3.63
Juvenile	1.61

[1] Privately operated.

[2] Prison custody officers are the equivalent of the public prisons prison officer.

Public prisons

Category	*Ratio for the number of prisoners to prison officers*
Category B	2.78
Category C	3.58
Juvenile	1.78

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many full-time teachers are employed in each London prison. [177816]

Paul Goggins: There are 64 full-time teachers employed in the London prisons, broken down as follows:

Prison	*Number*
Wandsworth	10
Wormwood Scrubs	10
Feltham	17
Holloway	6
Pentonville	4
Brixton	8
Latchmere	0
Belmarsh	9
Total	64

Learning opportunities for prisoners are also provided by a range of other staff including part-time teachers employed by the contractor, Instructional Officers, Prison Officer Instructors and other prison staff.

Probation Service

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* prisoners and *(b)* people under supervision of the probation service have obtained qualifications in basic skills in Merseyside in each year since 1997. [177935]

Paul Goggins: Until 2000 there were no clear definitions of what an adult should be expected to know, understand and do at each level of literacy, numeracy and spoken language. The Government's Skills for Life strategy is raising levels of adult basic skills through the introduction of national standards and curriculum documents for listening, speaking, reading, writing and numeracy. These now provide the framework for all adult literacy, numeracy and ESOL screening tests, diagnostic tools, programmes of study and qualifications.

In 2002–03 central monitoring of literacy, numeracy and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) was introduced for offenders under the supervision of the National Probation Service (NPS). This is the first year for which national targets were set. Targets were introduced in Prison Service establishments in 2000–01, from which date only aggregate figures are available. 2002–03 is the first year from which figures are available at establishment level.

The number of qualifications obtained by offenders in prison and under probation supervision in Merseyside from 2002–03 is contained in the tables:

Basic skills qualifications: offenders in custody

	Target	*Achieved*
2002–03	506	915
2003–04	692	938

Basic skills qualifications: offenders under probation supervision

	Target	*Achieved*
2002–03	38	95
2003–04	155	234

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps the Government are taking to maintain community and local involvement in the probationary services as part of the restructuring process. [175227]

Paul Goggins: The National Offender Management Service will ensure that effective links with bodies such as local criminal justice boards, crime and disorder reduction partnerships, drug action teams and local authorities, are maintained and developed. All regional offender managers will be required to establish these links within their region and to develop other community and neighbourhood networks as appropriate.

Project Reflex

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on Project Reflex. [177869]

Caroline Flint: Reflex is the government's response to organised immigration crime. It was established in 2000 as a multi-agency task force to co-ordinate intelligence and the law enforcement response. Led by the National Crime Squad (NCS), Reflex brings together the key agencies involved in combating organised immigration crime including the Immigration Service, the National Criminal Intelligence Service, the security and intelligence agencies, the UK Passport Service, government departments including the Crown Prosecution Service and key police forces.

Based on its initial success Reflex was awarded £60 million over three years starting in April 2003. The core aims of Reflex are to raise the risks that organised crime gangs must take, render their illegal businesses unprofitable and reduce the opportunities for them to exploit communities.

Reflex targets criminal groups involved in the volume facilitation of illegal migrants, human trafficking (in particular the trafficking of women and children) and running the criminal infrastructures that serve both to facilitate illegal entry and to exploit the illegal population once in the UK.

Between April 2003 and April 2004 reflex resulted in 38 disruptions. In the same period Reflex operations resulted in 38 convictions.

Secure Units

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to ensure that children sent to secure units are contained as near to their families as possible. [175835]

Paul Goggins: *[holding answer 25 May 2004]:* The Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) is responsible for commissioning and purchasing secure accommodation for young people who receive custodial sentences, and for placement decisions.

It aims to improve the geographical spread of places suitable for the younger and more vulnerable young people in secure training centres (STCs) and local authority secure children's homes (LASCHs). It has already expanded two STCs by a total of 64 places and a new one is due to open this summer at Oakhill, Milton Keynes. Based on modelling of the home locations of young people placed since April 2000, the 80 places it will provide—in exchange for withdrawal from 64 LASCH places—will significantly improve the geographical coverage in particular for young offenders from north London.

Sentencing Guidelines Council

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is envisaged that the Sentencing Guidelines Council will examine the case for reducing sentence lengths for less serious offences. [147632]

Paul Goggins: The Government believe that less serious offenders should be punished by fines or community penalties; prison should be reserved for serious, dangerous and persistent offenders. The Sentencing Guidelines Council will issue guidance on the appropriate sentences for all offences. One of its first tasks is to look at the use of the generic community sentence established by the Criminal Justice Act 2003. The Government believe that this new sentence offers the opportunity for more offenders to be punished in the community and to increase the opportunities for rehabilitation.

Shoplifting

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women were imprisoned for shoplifting offences in Greater London in the last five years. [158441]

Paul Goggins: The information requested is shown in the table.

Number of persons sentenced to immediate custody at all courts for stealing from shops and stalls in the Greater London Area[1], 1998 to 2002[2]

		Sentenced to immediate custody		
Offence	*Year*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
Stealing from shops and stalls	1998	1,957	415	2,372
	1999	2,225	418	2,643
	2000	2,394	481	2,875
	2001	2,290	435	2,725
	2002	2,730	518	3,248

[1] Metropolitan and City of London police force areas.
[2] These data are on the principal offence basis.

It should be noted that courts' sentencing decisions are influenced by the seriousness of the offence and take into account previous convictions.

Statistics for 2003 will be published in the autumn.

Women Prisoners

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many female prisoners were electronically tagged in *(a)* England and *(b)* Wales during the period between January and December 2003; and what the most recent available figures are for 2004. [177256]

Paul Goggins: In 2003 there were 2,153 female prisoners released on the Home Detention Curfew scheme (HDC). Between 1 January 2004 and 30 April 2004, there were 689 female prisoners released on HDC. These prisoners were all released from prisons in England There are no prisons for females in Wales. The country (i.e. England or Wales) in which electronically tagged prisoners reside on release is not recorded centrally.

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many women's places were not used in bail hostels in *(a)* England and *(b)* Wales during the period between January and December 2003; and what the most recent figures are for 2004. [177257]

Paul Goggins: There are currently 100 approved probation and bail hostels throughout the 42 probation areas which make up the National Probation Service for England and Wales. They provide a total of 2,238 places, of which 2,016 are for men and 222 for women. These approved premises broadly accept three categories of residents; bailees, those on community orders with a condition of residence at the approved premises, and those on licence following release from a custodial sentence. Five of these premises (all based in probation areas in England), are for women only. A further 28 premises (three of which are in Wales) provide mixed accommodation. However, no published data is available on how many women's places were not utilised during 2003 or 2004.

Mr. Stinchcombe: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many custodial sentences being served by female prisoners of one month or less were imposed on female convicts and served at HMP Holloway in the last year. [177494]

Paul Goggins: Of the women serving custodial sentences at Holloway in the last year, 123 had received sentences of one month or less. The Government does not believe that these kind of short sentences are generally effective in reducing re-offending which is why we are introducing the Generic Community Sentencewhich will enable sentencers to choose from a range of measures appropriate for each individual offender and Custody Plus which will ensure that short periods of custody are followed up with effective supervision in the community.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many female prisoners were in England and Wales *(a)* broken down by prison and *(b)* as a total in each year since 1997. [177510]

Paul Goggins: The number of female prisoners in England and Wales, broken down by establishment and as a total, on 30 June in each year since 1997 is given in the table.

Female prison population by establishment—England and Wales, 30 June

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Askham Grange	131	126	113	113	128	135	122
Birmingham	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Brockhill	135	132	145	155	150	161	155
Buckley Hall	0	0	0	0	0	203	308
Bullwood Hall	125	134	137	160	162	181	163
Cookham Wood	147	161	147	137	151	144	143
Downview	0	0	0	0	0	245	212
Drake Hall	281	275	209	162	232	276	303
Durham	42	45	103	96	104	97	107
East Sutton Park	95	97	96	70	89	95	99
Eastwood Park	125	259	277	301	299	322	286
Foston Hall	0	134	171	167	156	207	224
Highpoint	204	206	198	201	251	270	293
Holloway	524	516	501	490	474	480	465
Low Newton	47	83	105	207	251	286	268
Morton Hall	0	0	0	0	188	188	347
New Hall	317	364	379	366	347	348	374
Risley	152	160	0	0	0	0	0
Send	0	55	89	201	216	215	216
Styal	267	281	446	449	424	455	426
Winchester	80	91	91	80	91	86	84
Total	2,672	3,120	3,207	3,355	3,713	4,394	4,595

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the women's unit at HMP Durham will close; where the female inmates at HMP Durham will be moved to; and if he will make a statement. [177575]

Paul Goggins: Durham is to change its role from a high security prison to a community prison by April of next year and will no longer be holding women prisoners. The change is due to spare capacity in the rest of the high security estate and the availability of new accommodation for women at Bronzefield in Ashford, Middlesex opening on 17 June and Peterborough in June 2005.

There are currently around 100 women being held at the prison of whom seven are category A. The women will all be subject to comprehensive sentence plans to determine the most appropriate prison for them.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 21 June 2004

DEFENCE

Territorial Army

21. **Gregory Barker:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many people were in the Territorial Army on 1 January *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2004. [179379]

Mr. Caplin: The strength of the Territorial Army (TA) on 1 January 2004 was 38,900. This includes 3,320 Mobilised Reservists.

The hon. Member will recall from my reply to him on 26 January that I am unable to provide comparable figures for 1 January 1997.

Defence GII Agency

22. **Mr. Rendel:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when his Department's study of the future of the Defence Geographic and Imagery Intelligence Agency's estate will be completed. [179380]

Mr. Ingram: Initial conclusions are expected to be reached late in 2004. However, these will be subject to further consideration within the Department, within the context of other on-going estate studies. No announcement is likely before early 2005.

Joint Strike Fighter

24. **Mr. David Stewart:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent discussions he has had with the US Administration regarding the introduction of the joint strike fighter. [179382]

Mr. Ingram: Ministers and officials regularly discuss the progress of the Joint Strike Fighter programme with our US partners.

Nimrod Project

25. **Ms Coffey:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on progress with the Nimrod project. [179383]

Mr. Ingram: The agreement reached with BAE Systems in February 2003, embodied in a formal contract amendment on 23 February this year, has put the Nimrod MRA4 programme on a much sounder footing for the future. Under the restructured contract, design and development and production have been separated as far as possible, to ensure that technology is adequately de-risked before making further commitment to production price and schedule. The MOD, however, has been approving low risk production activities when it makes sense to do so, where these help maintain essential skills and product knowledge as well as preserve schedule.

While risks and challenges remain, the development and manufacture of the first three Nimrod MRA4 aircraft to be used in the flight trials programme is well under way and we are making good joint progress towards first flight this summer with the first trial aircraft having successfully undertaken low speed taxy trials at Woodford on 12 June 2004.

Armed Forces Deployment

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence in which countries members of the UK armed forces are deployed; how many individuals are deployed in each area; on what dates the deployment *(a)* began and *(b)* is expected to end; for what purpose the forces were deployed; whether each deployment was at the request of (i) the UN and (ii) another body; and what organisations are in command of UK forces in each area. [177897]

Mr. Ingram: United Kingdom armed forces are deployed overseas on peace-keeping and conflict prevention/resolution operations in the following countries:

	Approx personnel numbers	*Year current ops started*	*UN mission or other*
Middle East (Inc Iraq)	9,500	2003	Coalition
Bosnia	800	1996	NATO/UK
Afghanistan area	600	2002	Multinational
Cyprus	410	1964	UN
Kosovo	190	1999	NATO/UK
Georgia	7	1993	UN
Sierra Leone	20	1999	UN
Dem Rep of Congo	5	1999	UN
Ethiopia/ Eritrea	4	2000	UN
Liberia	3	2003	UN

The UK's participation in all of these operations is kept under regular review. Information on other overseas deployments are provided in the Ministry of Defence's Annual Report and Accounts 2000–2003, and copies are available in the House of Commons Library (ref: HC1125).

UK personnel remain under the ultimate command of the UK at all times. Varying degrees of local command and control are delegated to deployed commanders—including commanders from other UN, Alliance or Coalition members—in order to allow them to complete assigned tasks. In such circumstances, the UK retains a veto over specific missions and tasks given to UK personnel or formations.

Army Medal Office

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on what basis, and with what external advice, the site of the Army Medal Office in Droitwich was *(a)* assessed as being suitable for residential development and *(b)* valued. [178996]

Mr. Caplin: The land was assessed as suitable for housing based on earlier informal contacts with the Local Planning Authority and a series of inquiries received from, or on behalf of national housebuilders. In the four years preceding the valuation date, five

enquiries or re-enquiries were received of this nature. These continued approaches indicated a local demand for building land.

The valuation was prepared by Defence Estates1 own in-house Chartered Surveyors. In making the valuation, due regard was given to knowledge gained from open market residential land transactions, while taking into account the nature of the site at Droitwich.

British Indian Ocean Territories

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which UK armed forces are deployed in the British Indian Ocean territories; and what use they make of the US facilities on Diego Garcia. [179697]

Mr. Ingram: There is a small Royal Navy, Royal Marine and Army detachment deployed on Diego Garcia within the British Forces British Indian Ocean territory. Their use of US facilities extends to accommodation, the recreation facilities and some logistic support.

Dentists

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many dentists there were for every 3,000 members of the armed forces in *(a)* 1987, *(b)* 1997 and *(c)* the latest year for which figures are available. [179227]

Mr. Caplin: The number of dentists for every 3,000 members of the UK regular forces is as follows:

	Number of dentists
1 April 1987	4.16
1 April 1997	4.12
1 April 2004	3.65

All figures are rounded to two decimal places.

Flight ZD576

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence where the wreckage of flight ZD576 is located. [179587]

Mr. Caplin: The wreckage of flight ZD576 is held in secure storage at the Defence Aviation Repair Agency Fleetlands in Hampshire.

Iraq

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what changes are planned in the nature of the deployment of British troops in Iraq after 30 June. [179370]

Mr. Hoon: On 30 June, the UK will no longer be an Occupying Power under the terms of the Geneva Conventions in Iraq. The Iraqi Government will increasingly take direct responsibility for security. Prime Minister-designate Dr. Iyad Allawi explained in his letter to the Security Council that he intends to establish appropriate security structures that will allow his Government and Iraqi security forces to progressively assume security responsibility. These structures will include the Prime Minister's Ministerial Committee for National Security which will set a broad framework for security policy and to which he will invite representatives from the multinational force as appropriate.

In Multinational Division South-East, British forces will fully support this process. Iraqi local authorities and security forces will take responsibility for local security wherever possible on 30 June, with multinational forces in support.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the current situation in Iraq. [179377]

Mr. Hoon: An Interim Iraqi Government has been chosen and stands ready to assume full sovereignty and authority on 30 June. This marks the end of occupation governed by the Geneva Convention. Details of the political process have been set out in UN Security Council Resolution 1546, which acknowledges the continued role of the multinational force in supporting the Iraqi Government. The UN Electoral Commission is preparing for full elections to the Transitional Assembly before the end of January 2005.

In my visit to Iraq last week, I was able to see for myself the contribution personnel from the United Kingdom are making to Iraq's future. For example, they have trained some 8,000 police in the south. In Baghdad a United Kingdom Ministry of Defence team is helping the Iraqi Minister for Defence set up and develop his department, and officers from the New Iraqi Army are due shortly to begin training at Sandhurst. After 30 June, responsibility for security will pass to the Iraqi Government. The United Kingdom is fully committed to this process and the transition has already started—for example, control of the Iraqi Coastal Defence Forces, which were trained by UK personnel, was passed to the Iraqis on 12 June.

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assistance British forces have provided to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission regarding military cemeteries and memorials in Iraq. [178605]

Mr. Caplin: British forces have provided security, general clearance and maintenance assistance at cemeteries and memorials in southern Iraq.

The present climate is not conducive to the commencement of any major CWGC projects in Iraq. However, the situation will be re-assessed after the new interim Government of Iraq has assumed its responsibilities.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the names are of those individuals reported to have been killed or injured as a result of action by Armed Forces personnel in Iraq in whose cases the commanding officer of the regiment concerned decided there was no case to answer. [179011]

Mr. Ingram: I am withholding the names of alleged Iraqi victims of abuse at the hands of UK soldiers, where these individuals are still living, in accordance with Exemption 12 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. Information on the numbers of cases where the commanding officer decided there was no case to answer is currently being collated from unit records.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many cases of *(a)* dysentery and *(b)* similar conditions were reported by British Forces serving in Iraq in the year ending 31 March. [176374]

Mr. Ingram: For the year ending 31 March 2004, 50 suspected cases of dysentery were reported. Central records of similar disorders are not held, and it would not be possible to calculate these except at disproportionate cost.

Official Vehicles

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what percentage of official vehicles used by his Department are run on *(a)* petrol, *(b)* diesel, *(c)* liquid petroleum gas and *(d)* compressed natural gas. [172769]

Mr. Caplin: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by my hon. Friend the Minister for the Cabinet Office (Mr. Alexander) on 25 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1538W. The Government have signed up to various targets for improving the performance of its own vehicle fleet, details of which, together with reports on each Department's progress towards these targets, are available at www.sustainable-development.gov.uk.

The Ministry of Defence's Ministerial vehicles are provided by the Government Car Service (GCS). Detailed information on the breakdown of the GCS vehicle fleet is being provided separately.

The MOD's non-operational fleet, which might be regarded as the official vehicle fleet, is supplied under the terms of contracts for service provision and is not owned by the Department. It is not therefore possible to provide a breakdown of vehicles used by fuel type.

The MOD also operates a large range of operational vehicle fleets. When procuring new operational vehicles MOD ensures compliance with current domestic and EU legislation and the current NATO Single Fuel Policy. Since the acceptance and implementation of this policy by the UK in 1991, all operational vehicles procured will run on diesel or kerosene type fuels. For older vehicles, conversion programmes have been undertaken where this represents a cost-effective option for the remaining life of the fleet.

Procurement

John Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what measures his Department is taking to improve the procurement process for equipment for the armed forces; and if he will make a statement. [179369]

Mr. Ingram: Following a comprehensive review of the Defence Procurement Agency's performance a package of measures have been put in place to re-invigorate the Smart Acquisition measures introduced from 1998.

This work includes strengthening the Corporate Governance within the DPA, improving key acquisition processes—including greater early investment in projects to reduce risk, making better use of available skills, knowledge and experience and building on the Department's relationship with key suppliers.

This work complements changes to transform the acquisition processes of the Defence Logistics Organisation.

Remembrance Events

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the support given by the armed forces to remembrance and other events at Commonwealth War Graves Commission and similar sites in *(a)* France and *(b)* Belgium; and what such events have taken place in the last year. [178589]

Mr. Caplin: There were just over 1,900 UK Armed Forces personnel in Normandy for the commemorative events that took place between Saturday 5 and Monday 7 June.

Support for other events is routinely arranged by our Defence Attaches, including the Anniversary of the Battle of the Somme and the 75th Anniversary of the dedication of the Menin Gate. Unit Commanders are also able to authorise attendance at various remembrance and other events at Commonwealth War Graves Commission and former battle sites in France and Belgium throughout the year, consistent with their regimental histories.

Attendance reports for these events are not held centrally and it is not possible to provide a report covering every event that has taken place in the last year.

Royal Irish Regiment

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* soldiers and *(b)* ex-soldiers of the Royal Irish Regiment have been (i) investigated and (ii) prosecuted in regard to fraudulent claims for payment associated with resettlement in each year since 2000. [175724]

Mr. Caplin: Information relating to fraudulent resettlement claims since 2000 by serving soldiers will take further time to collate. I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House. The investigation of ex-soldiers is a matter for the appropriate civil police authority.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many soldiers belonging to the Royal Irish Regiment received payments as part of their resettlement on leaving the Army in 2003; and what the average amount was. [175725]

Mr. Ingram: A total of 74 soldiers from the Royal Irish Regiment received payments of Individual Resettlement Training Cost grants on leaving the Army in 2003. The average amount paid was £454.29.

There are associated travel and subsistence costs but this information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Suez Medals

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his estimate is of how many General Service medals with Canal Zone clasps have been issued to date. [179378]

Mr. Caplin: As at last Friday 18 June the four single Service medal offices had between them cleared 9,709 cases out of the 39,666 applications so far received.

A total of 489 Naval General Service Medals 1915–62 and 7,884 General Service Medals 1918–62 had been issued with the new clasp Canal Zone, plus another 961 clasps on their own, where recipients had previously received the medal with another clasp for other qualifying service.

UK Sites (US Use)

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions have taken place with the US on using UK sites for anti-ballistic missile interceptor sites. [179206]

Mr. Hoon *[holding answer 17 June 2004]:* I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 25 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1616W to the hon. Member for Nottingham, South (Alan Simpson).

UN Convention Against Torture

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what guidance he has issued to UK service personnel on whether the use of hoods on detainees constitutes inhuman treatment for the purposes of the UN Convention Against Torture. [173019]

Mr. Hoon *[holding answer 13 May 2004]:* The directive issued by the Chief of Joint Operations to the Commander of British Forces in Iraq covers methods that may be used when obscuring vision, and circumstances in which these methods may be applied. Hoods will not be used when apprehending or detaining Iraqi citizens in Iraq.

Although the armed forces do not generally hood detainees, the MOD does not believe that the use of hoods on apprehended persons amounts to torture or inhuman treatment for the purposes of the UN Convention in all circumstances. There are occasions on which we believe its use to be appropriate, for example, the temporary obscuring of vision by hooding or other methods to prevent persons who have been apprehended from recognising their locations or other apprehended persons. We do not believe that the use of hoods is acceptable during questioning.

Veterans

Laura Moffatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress he has made in producing a comprehensive document outlining his Department's support for armed forces veterans. [179381]

Mr. Caplin: In March 2003 the Ministry of Defence launched the 'Strategy for Veterans'. This was the result of work which aimed to establish a structured relationship between key deliverers of services to veterans across government and the voluntary and corporate sectors. It also established a strategic framework to assist all areas of Government to develop policies and activities affecting United Kingdom veterans. The document outlines three principal areas of activity: optimising arrangements for transition from Service to civilian life; ensuring that appropriate help is given to those veterans who need it; and increasing the recognition of veterans and their achievements by the wider society.

PRIME MINISTER

Chief Adviser on Delivery

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the *(a)* powers and *(b)* duties of his Chief Adviser on Delivery. [179819]

The Prime Minister: As Chief Adviser on Delivery, Professor Michael Barber advises me on delivery of the Government's public service priorities, including the joint Cabinet Office/Treasury Public Service Agreement target:

'Improve public services by working with departments to help them meet their PSA targets, consistently with the fiscal rules.'

Iraq

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister when Saddam Hussein is to be handed over to the Iraqi authorities. [178252]

The Prime Minister: Iraqi Prime Minister Allawi has confirmed that criminal proceedings will be brought against Saddam Hussein and President Bush has confirmed the intention of the US to pass Saddam Hussein to the Iraqi authorities to face criminal prosecution. The Iraqi authorities and the US are in discussions about the transfer.

Lord Lieutenants

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Prime Minister how many lord lieutenants and deputy lieutenants in *(a)* England, *(b)* the North West and *(c)* Lancashire were (i) Masons and (ii) members of political parties in the last 10 years. [179286]

The Prime Minister: The information requested is not held centrally. Lord lieutenants and deputy lieutenants are of course aware that their role is essentially non-political and impartial.

Minister Without Portfolio

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the work of the Minister without Portfolio. [179817]

The Prime Minister: Details of the responsibilities for the Minister without Portfolio can be found in the List of Ministerial Responsibilities, copies of which are available in the Library of the House.

US Military Activities

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Prime Minister what discussions took place in his recent meetings with the US President concerning US military activities on Diego Garcia and the Chagos Islands; and if he will make a statement. [179699]

The Prime Minister: I regularly discuss a wide range of issues with President Bush. As with previous administrations, it is not the practice of this Government to make public all the details of discussions with foreign Governments.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

D-day Commemorations

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many D-Day veterans benefited from Lottery and Government money to revisit the beaches. [179515]

Estelle Morris: The National Lottery Veterans Reunited initiative includes the Heroes Return scheme, which provides Lottery funding to help Second World War veterans arrange commemorative visits to the overseas areas where British Armed Forces served in the Second World War. Through Heroes Return, over £1.9 million has already been awarded to veterans, their wives and husbands, widows and widowers and, where required, their present day carers, to return to the overseas areas where the veterans saw active service. Of the funding awarded so far, £1.2 million has been awarded for visits to Normandy. The funding has enabled over 4,200 people, including over 2,100 veterans, to travel to Normandy this month.

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assistance her Department provided to the D-day 60th Anniversary events and commemorations. [179183]

Estelle Morris: The Department did not assist directly in the commemorations, but funding has been made available through the National Lottery Veterans Reunited initiative to ensure that all generations of UK residents can commemorate the momentous events that led to the end of the Second World War. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State first announced our intention to provide Lottery support in this area last October.

The Veterans Reunited initiative has three strands: Their Past, Your Future, focusing on activities for schools and young people; Heroes Return, focusing on overseas visits for veterans and their carers; and Home Front Recall, providing funding for events and activities in the UK. The initiative has an overall budget of over £25 million and will continue making awards until the end of 2005.

Through Heroes Return, over £1.9 million has already been awarded to veterans, their wives and husbands, widows and widowers and, where required, their present day carers, to return to the overseas areas where the veterans saw active service. Of the funding awarded so far, £1.2 million has been awarded for visits to Normandy. The funding has enabled over 4,200 people, including over 2,100 veterans, to travel to Normandy this month.

One of the elements of Their Past, Your Future was a competition with opportunities for schools to win visits to the D-Day commemorations. The first prize winners were Abbey Grange School in Leeds and a party of pupils and teachers joined the official 60th anniversary cruise and commemorations. Further visits are planned for schools later in the year to commemorate other major events such as Arnhem.

Home Front Recall was the most recent element of the Veterans Reunited programme to be launched. One of the first awards to be made was to allow the Rotherham branch of Normandy veterans to travel to Portsmouth for the official D-Day commemorations.

Greyhounds

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the turnover was for bookmakers on greyhound racing in 2003. [179234]

Mr. Caborn: This information is not collected by the Department; but I understand that the British Greyhound Racing Board estimate that the total turnover of on and off-course betting in 2003 was about £3 billion.

Ministerial Visits

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many journeys were made by helicopter by each Minister in her Department and its predecessors in each of the last 10 years; and what the journey length was in each case. [175742]

Tessa Jowell: I have been unable to recover information about helicopter trips taken by Ministers in this Department before the General Election in 2001. Since then there has been one helicopter journey made by me on 24 September 2003. The journey was from Tirana to Butrint in Albania and back again. The approximate distance was 99 miles each way, so 198 miles in total.

None of the other Ministers have made journeys by helicopter.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Abandoned Vehicles

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many abandoned vehicles were removed by local authorities in Greater London in each year since 1997, broken down by borough. [176708]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* Statistics for abandoned vehicles removed and destroyed were first compiled in the Defra Municipal Waste Management Survey for 2000–01. Results for authorities in London are available for 2000–01 and 2001–02. Results for 2002–03 are supplemented by results from the Defra Abandoned Vehicle Survey 2002–03.

Numbers of abandoned vehicles removed and destroyed by each London borough and Waste Collection Authority are listed as follows:

	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Barking and Dagenham	2,761	n/a	3,201
Barnet	3,287	4,431	3,940
Bexley	1,356	1,776	2,391
Brent	3,471	4,115	4,184
Bromley	3,895	4,215	3,129
Camden	1,629	1,897	1,676
City of London	n/a	n/a	158
Croydon	2,878	4,376	4,200

	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
Ealing	3,754	4,916	3,975
Enfield	4,711	6,347	4,973
Greenwich	3,120	4,200	4,429
Hackney	2,700	4,066	3,609
Hammersmith and Fulham	1,430	1,473	2,188
Haringey	6,500	[1]4,560	5,900
Harrow	1,914	[1]2,249	2,650
Havering	1,250	3,126	2,086
Hillingdon	2,286	3,128	3,741
Hounslow	2,247	3,118	3,125
Islington	2,619	3,643	2,748
Kensington and Chelsea	195	232	265
Kingston upon Thames	739	2,159	3,053
Lambeth	3,308	3,775	3,577
Lewisham	5,000	4,671	3,554
Merton	1,683	2140	2,165
Newham	6,704	8,117	3,105
Redbridge	1,562	2,219	2,005
Richmond upon Thames	1,201	1,201	970
Southwark	1,934	2,848	2,245
Sutton	1,651	2,166	2,055
Tower Hamlets	n/a	n/a	2,781
Waltham Forest	2,716	3,466	3,351
Wandsworth	2,571	2,794	2,753
Westminster	496	333	336
London total	83,900	104,500	94,500

n/a = results not available.
[1] for 2001–02 = GLA estimate.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the percentage change in the number of abandoned vehicles in England and Wales was in each year since 1997–98. [177057]

Mr. Morley: Figures for numbers of abandoned vehicles removed and destroyed in England were first collected in the Defra Municipal Waste Management Survey for 2000–01. Results for 2002–03 are supplemented by the Defra Abandoned Vehicle Survey for 2002–03.

Figures for 2001–02 showed an increase of 28 per cent. from 2000–01.

Figures for 2002–03 showed an increase of 8 per cent. from 2001–02.

Bovine TB

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will publish, by payment area, the compensation paid to farmers for each bovine TB breakdown for each of the last three years. [178785]

Mr. Bradshaw: TB compensation paid to farmers in relation to cattle for England, Scotland and Wales for the period 2001–02, 2002–03 and 2003–04 is detailed in the following table. A more detailed breakdown is available only at disproportionate cost.

£

Payment area	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
England	6,933,629	23,576,532	24,093,542
Scotland	45,788	226,570	538,449
Wales	2,264,024	8,137,810	9,782,904
Total compensation paid to farmers in Great Britain	9,243,441	31,940,912	34,414,895

Fisheries

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with British trawlermen who are fishing or who aim to fish off the disputed waters of Western Sahara. [179297]

Mr. Bradshaw: The UK Government has had no discussions with British trawlermen about fishing in the waters of Western Sahara and is not aware of any existing or anticipated fishing activities in that area.

Galapagos Islands

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions her Department has had with the Government of Ecuador to ensure that the Charles Darwin Research Station in the Galapagos Islands is not adversely affected by activities of fishermen protesting against quotas. [179171]

Mr. Rammell: I have been asked to reply.

Our Ambassador in Quito has made clear our concerns for the safety of foreign scientists to the Ecuadorean authorities, including the Minister of the Environment. The Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, through its Darwin Initiative is funding two UK organisations to carry out biodiversity conservation research projects on the Galapagos Islands and is in close communication with them regarding any security concerns. At present, neither project personnel or project work have been adversely affected by the protests.

Hazardous Waste

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the *(a)* location and *(b)* capacity is of each site presently licensed for (i) hazardous and (ii) contaminated waste, broken down by region; which sites will continue to be licensed for such waste after the implementation of the EU Landfill Directive; and which sites (A) are and (B) will be licensed to take contaminated soil. [176384]

Mr. Morley: The location of each site presently licensed for hazardous waste is set out in a table which I have placed in the library (table 1). These are the sites for which operators submitted a conditioning plan to the Environment Agency on 16 July 2002, outlining their proposals for meeting the requirements of the Landfill (England and Wales) Regulations 2002. From 16 July 2004, when the co-disposal of hazardous and non-hazardous waste ends, the majority of these sites will revert to a non-hazardous classification.

Sites whose operators have applied for permits for their respective sites to receive hazardous waste after the implementation of the EU Landfill Directive are set out in two further tables which I have placed in the Library (tables 2 and 3).

The 22 applications listed in table 2 are for permits to become merchant or in-house landfills for hazardous waste. The identity of two of the in-house landfills in table 2 cannot be revealed for reasons of national security.

The 35 applications listed in table 3 are for permits for sites to contain single cells for the disposal of stable, non-reactive hazardous wastes.

Data on capacity of individual hazardous waste sites is not held centrally. Most types of waste are 'contaminated'. Approximately 1,000 landfills are licensed and permitted to take waste for disposal in England and Wales.

The Environment Agency has no centrally stored information on which sites are presently licensed to take contaminated soil.

One merchant landfill site has been granted a permit to take contaminated soil after the implementation of the EU Landfill Directive: at Purton Brickworks (table 2, number 1). The operators of two merchant landfill sites have applications still under consideration for permits to take contaminated soils after the implementation of the EU Landfill Directive: at Eardswick Hall (table 2, number 6); and at Whitemoss (table 2, number 7).

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans the Environment Agency has to encourage the cement and lime industry to become major operators of hazardous waste incinerators; and whether the Agency has considered plans to locate an incinerator at Lostock Gralam in Cheshire. [176824]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency takes no part in the commercial decisions of industry to undertake specific activities and is not aware of any applications from the cement and lime industry to operate hazardous waste incinerators. Several cement and lime operators are permitted to incinerate hazardous wastes as substitutes for conventional fuels used in the cement-making process, such as coal and petroleum coke. This is only permitted where the operator can demonstrate to the Agency's satisfaction that no net detriment to the environment results in comparison with the use of conventional fuels alone.

The Agency has not received an application for an incinerator at Lostock Gralam in Cheshire.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what contingency plans she has put in place to deal with hazardous waste following the forthcoming ban on co-disposal, with particular reference to warehousing and other storage facilities. [177496]

Mr. Morley: The Government and the Environment Agency are monitoring closely waste industry plans for the provision of treatment and disposal capacity, and the response of waste producers. For example, a recent survey of the chemical industry, as reported to the Hazardous Waste Forum, shows that waste producers in that sector do not envisage difficulty in meeting the Landfill Directive requirements. Waste producers should ensure that they are meeting in full the requirements of their duty of care and avoid the need for warehousing or storage of waste over and above that which normally occurs.

Heat Pumps

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action her Department is taking to encourage the development of *(a)* ground source and *(b)* air source heat pumps. [176760]

Mr. Morley: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend, the Minister of State, Trade and Industry (Mr. Stephen Timms) on 10 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 564W.

Landfill Sites

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which body is responsible for *(a)* decontamination and *(b)* preventing the leachate if a closed landfill site begins to leak contaminants into the water supply or environment. [174587]

Mr. Morley: Under the provisions of the Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 2000, enacted in January 2004, the quality of a public, potable water supply to a consumer's premises (up to the tap) is the responsibility of the relevant water undertaker for that location. This includes responsibility for decontamination.

If a closed landfill site begins to leak contaminants into the water supply in England and Wales, responsibility for the overall process of preventing the leachate is divided. The Environment Agency is responsible for 'investigating' the incident. The body (or person) who causes or knowingly permits the pollution of controlled waters is responsible for 'remedying' the pollution. The Environment Agency in turn is responsible for 'ensuring' that the body (or person) who caused or knowingly permitted the pollution takes remedial action. The Agency has powers to prosecute the perpetrator of the pollution in these circumstances.

The Drinking Water Inspectorate investigates incidents affecting drinking water quality. Local authorities are required to monitor the quality of private water supplies, namely those not provided by a water undertaker.

Responsibility for the aftercare and maintenance of closed landfill sites, including the prevention of environmental pollution, will depend on the legislation that was in force at the time the landfill site ceased operations. Sites that closed before the implementation of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 were subject to a different regime to the one currently in place.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Castle Point, of 24 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1292W, on landfill sites, how many offences were identified for each year from 2000 to 2003; and what the *(a)* highest, *(b)* average and *(c)* lowest fine was in each year. [178703]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency's data in the following table on landfill pollution charges relates

to events which were categorised having a major (category 1), significant (category 2) or minor (category 3) environmental impact. No environmental impact (category 4) incidents included in the previous answer have not been included, as the offences did not involve the release of pollutants.

Landfill pollution charges

	Total charges	Enforcement notices	Cautions	Prosecutions	Total fines (£)	Highest fine (£)	Lowest fine (£)	Average fine (£)
2000	5	0	0	[1]5	36,000	20,000	2,000	9,000
2001	19	0	4	[2]15	15,500	8,000	7,500	7,750
2002	20	1	5	[3]15	103,250	15,000	6,000	10,325
2003	29	0	10	[4]19	30,000	10,000	1,000	3,333

[1] Five convictions (four fines, one conditional discharge).
[2] Two convictions (both with fines), 13 acquittals.
[3] 10 convictions (all with fines), five acquittals.
[4] 15 convictions (nine fines, three absolute discharges, three no evidence offered), four acquittals.

Pesticides Tax

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her policy is on a pesticides tax. [179595]

Alun Michael: A Voluntary Initiative to reduce the environmental damage caused by the agricultural use of pesticides has been in place since April 2001. In Budget 2004 the Government confirmed the view that the initiative will be effective in reducing the environmental pollution associated with pesticides provided that it is fully implemented. However, to cover the possibility that the initiative might not deliver the required environmental benefits within a reasonable time scale, the Government have kept the options for a tax or economic instrument under review.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Departmental Decisions (Judicial Review)

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) which decisions by his Department were challenged by judicial review in session *(a)* 1997–98, *(b)* 1998–99 and *(c)* 1999–2000; and in how many cases the (i) Department's decision was upheld by the court, (ii) court found for the applicant, (iii) Department submitted to the judgment and (iv) Department appealed successfully against the decision; [158466]

(2) which decisions by his Department were challenged by judicial review in the session 2002–03; and in how many cases the *(a)* Department's decision was upheld by the court, *(b)* court found for the applicant, *(c)* Department submitted to the judgment and *(d)* Department appealed successfully against the decision. [161158]

Paul Goggins: There are no central records containing the information sought. This could be obtained only by consulting individual case files and would involve disproportionate cost. There are no central records containing the information sought. This could be obtained only by consulting individual case files and would involve disproportionate cost. The Administrative Court's records are organised by reference to the subject matter of judicial review claims, not the government department concerned. They contain the following information for immigration and asylum claims, which make up more than 90 per cent. of the judicial review cases brought against the Home Office.

Asylum, October2002 to November 2003

	Number
Claims received	2,693
Claims allowed	36

Non-Asylum Immigration Cases, October 2002 to November 2003

	Number
Claims received	272
Claims allowed	2

Asylum, October 1997 to September 2000

	Number
Claims received	5,748
Claims allowed	[1]685

[1] which is 11.9 per cent. of the total

Non-Asylum Immigration Cases, October 1997 to September 2000

	Number
Claims received	1,117
Claims allowed	[1]50

[1] which is 4.5 per cent. of the total

These figures show that in the period in question of the immigration judicial review cases brought against the Home Office only 10.7 per cent. were successful.

Drug Treatment and Testing Orders

Phil Sawford: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people in *(a)* England and Wales and *(b)* Scotland have been given a drug treatment and testing order in each year for which figures are available who otherwise would have received a prison sentence of over six months. [174852]

Paul Goggins: Information about how many offenders in England and Wales and Scotland given a drug treatment and testing order (DTTO) who would otherwise have received a prison sentence of over six months is not available.

It is impossible to predict with any degree of accuracy what the outcome of cases where a DTTO was made would have been if the DTTO had not been available as a sentencing option. However, the DTTO is targeted at offenders with entrenched patterns of drug misuse who have generally committed a considerable amount of crime to fund their drug habit. While the vast majority of DTTO cases are likely to be heard in the magistrates courts, a significant number (perhaps as many as a quarter) of offenders on DTTOs are sentenced at Crown court. In view of the frequency and seriousness of offences committed by offenders in the target group, we anticipate that a significant proportion of those who are sentenced to DTTOs would otherwise have been sent to prison.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many drug treatment and testing orders were made in Crosby in 2003–04. [177937]

Paul Goggins: According to data from the National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse, 60 drug treatment and testing orders (DTTOs) were commenced within the area covered by Sefton Drug Action Team in 2003–04, of which five related to residents of Crosby.

Electoral Fraud

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will review the sentencing guidelines for electoral fraud to strengthen their deterrent effect. [179222]

Mr. Leslie: I have been asked to reply.

My Department does not issue or review sentencing guidelines. That is a matter for the Sentencing Guidelines Council. However, I will keep this matter under review and if it appears that guidelines are necessary I may ask the Sentencing Guidelines Council to consider the issue.

ICT

Mr. Simon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his targets are for improving the information and communication technology (ICT) skills base of staff within *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies; and what method he uses to certify the competence levels achieved by staff receiving training in ICT. [173713]

Fiona Mactaggart: Through the formal performance and development reporting process line managers would normally assess the competencies of staff in using information and communication technology (ICT) to carry out their work.

The target for the Home Office and its agencies (excluding non-departmental public bodies) is for all staff to obtain the standard competency level in the computer systems that they use regularly (e.g.Word processing).

The Home Office has developed a strategy that identifies the skills required and creates opportunities for staff to develop and make best use of the technology available to them. Across the Home Office and its agencies we have defined IT competencies that are aligned with European standards, such as the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL). This is the internationally recognised qualification used in over 125 European countries, which enables people to demonstrate their competence in computer skills.

As part of the rollout of new PC software across the Home Office and the Immigration and Nationality Directorate the Home Office intends to provide access to electronic learning tools for all core computer systems.

Furthermore the Home Office will also provide opportunities for staff to gain advanced level competencies and qualification through the British Computer Society and the internationally recognised Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) certification.

National Criminal Intelligence Service

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the total funding of the National Criminal Intelligence Service has been in each year since its inception; and how many *(a)* directly employed staff, *(b)* contracted in staff and *(c)* seconded officers it had in each year. [177469]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 9 June 2004]*: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Altrincham and Sale West (Mr. Brady) on 6 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1699W.

I also refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Winchester (Mr. Oaten) on 15 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 863 W.

Probation Hostels

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many probation hostels are operational in England and Wales; how many places were available in probation hostels in England and Wales on the latest date for which figures are available; and how many of those places were occupied by *(a)* bailees and *(b)* convicted sex offenders. [172267]

Paul Goggins: There are 100 approved premises in England and Wales. During March 2004 2,198 places were available. No central data are available on the number of places occupied by bailees or those convicted of sexual offences.

Probation Service

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost per square metre of providing office and storage space for the National Probation Service in Central London was in 2003. [177734]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 10 June 2004]*: The cost of providing office and storage space in 2002–03 for the London Probation Area was £11,726,000, equivalent to £223 per square metre.

With effect from 2003–04, all costs across the whole of the National Probation Estate were paid centrally and pooled. The national average cost per square metre was set at £180.

The London Probation Area had their grant reduced by £1,734,000 in recognition of the fact that their costs have been reduced as a consequence of the national pooling arrangement.

Secure Training Centres

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions the police have been called to secure training centres in each of the last five years; and for what reasons. [176780]

Paul Goggins: Police attendance's at secure training centres (STCs) are not individually recorded.

Sex Offenders

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of residents in probation hostels are convicted sex offenders. [172395]

Paul Goggins: We do not maintain a central record of the number of residents in approved premises who have been convicted of sexual offences.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women were on the sex offenders' register on 1 May. [177815]

Paul Goggins: The 2003–04 Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements annual reports, which will provide statistics on the number of registered sex offenders living in the community on 31 March 2004, will be published later this year.

Victim Care Charities

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will change his policy of charging victim care charities market rents for office space created for agencies working closely with the criminal justice system in new magistrates courts. [179008]

Mr. Leslie: I have been asked to reply.

Magistrates courts are expected to provide office space at no cost for 'Support Care Staff' for the use of referring to papers and conducting occasional interviews while at the courthouse. Agreement on the provision of accommodation is reached on this basis. Should the requirement of victim care charities exceed this agreement, negotiations are made locally. However, the launch of Her Majesty's Courts Service (HMCS) in April 2005 will provide an opportunity to assess all current estates, contracts and maintenance arrangements and deliver seamless integration of the Court Service and magistrates courts estates to improve and provide efficient services.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Crown Prosecution Service

Mr. Drew: To ask the Solicitor-General if she will make a statement on the performance of the Crown Prosecution Service. [168311]

The Solicitor-General: I would refer the hon. Member to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) Annual Report.

The CPS is the principal public prosecuting authority for England and Wales, handling criminal cases investigated by the police.

The following table provides some key figures on the volume of cases handled by the service in 2003 and in the two preceding years; and the outcome of those cases.

While these figures support the view that the CPS makes a valuable contribution to the delivery of justice, the Service has set itself further challenging targets for 2004–05. In this year, it will seek to build on its success and reduce the proportion of unsuccessful outcomes by 11 per cent. as compared with the levels seen in 2001–02. This will contribute to the achievement of the wider criminal justice system target of bringing 1.2 million offences to justice in 2005–06. The CPS will also contribute to the reduction in the numbers of ineffective trials to 18.5 per cent. in the Crown court and 24.5 per cent. in the magistrates court.

To achieve these targets, the main priority for the CPS in 2004–05 is to introduce the statutory charging scheme, where prosecutors will determine the charges to be preferred in the more serious cases. This follows the success of pilots in 2002–03 and of the shadow charging scheme in 2003–04. The CPS will also take a leading role in introducing the "no witness, no justice" arrangements to provide much better information and support to witnesses throughout their involvement in the criminal justice system.

These activities are designed to move the CPS towards achieving its vision of being a world-class, independent prosecuting authority that delivers a valued public service.

Crown Prosecution Service case outcomes

	2001		*2002*		*2003*	
	Number	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
Magistrates courts						
Finalised of which	1,373,426	—	1,411,903	—	1,485,408	—
Pre-charge advice	45,580	—	57,505	—	117,172	—
Non-criminal proceedings	11,063	—	9,221	—	15,337	—
Case outcomes						
Discontinuances (including bind overs)	198,908	16.2	197,940	15.7	181,423	14.3
Warrants etc.	73,790	6.0	78,758	6.3	73,432	5.8
Committals discharged	766	0.1	931	0.1	1,693	0.1
Dismissals no case to answer	1,632	0.1	1,722	0.1	2,575	0.2
Dismissals after trial	14,645	1.2	15,458	1.2	15,852	1.3
Total unsuccessful outcomes	289,741	23.5	294,809	23.4	274,975	21.7
Guilty pleas	786,380	63.9	803,859	63.9	799,354	63.2
Proofs in absence	117,882	9.6	119,659	9.5	144,521	11.4

Crown Prosecution Service case outcomes

	2001		2002		2003	
	Number	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
Convictions after trial	37,167	3.0	39,516	3.1	46,933	3.7
Total convictions	941,429	76.5	963,034	76.6	990,808	78.3
Committals to the Crown court	89,603	—	92,114	—	96,382	—
Crown court						
Finalised	112,438	—	123,754	—	126,949	—
Committals for sentence	18,460	—	19,940	—	19,615	—
Appeals	11,568	—	11,763	—	11,384	—
Case outcomes						
Judge ordered acquittals (including bind overs)	12,744	15.2	14,340	15.3	14,751	15.1
Warrants etc.	1,445	1.7	1,739	1.9	1,914	2.0
Judge directed acquittals	1,495	1.8	1,442	1.5	1,565	1.6
Jury acquittals	6,630	7.9	6,402	6.8	6,874	7.0
Total unsuccessful outcomes	22,314	26.7	23,922	25.6	25,104	25.6
Guilty pleas	50,597	60.4	57,024	60.9	59,701	61.0
Convictions after trial	10,803	12.9	12,677	13.5	13,076	13.4
Total convictions	61,400	73.3	69,701	74.4	72,777	74.4

Figures for 2003 are provisional, and may be subject to revision.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Solicitor-General what steps she is taking to increase the number of lawyers in Merseyside Crown Prosecution Service. [170340]

The Solicitor-General: CPS Merseyside currently has the equivalent of 82.74 full-time lawyers. The figures for 2001 to 2003 are 71.3, 78.3 and 79.6 respectively.

CPS Merseyside is actively recruiting prosecutors and, in addition to national advertising campaigns, advertisements have been placed in the regional and local press in the north west and in legal and minority ethnic publications. CPS Merseyside also uses continuous online recruitment via the internet. Candidates can apply at any time and, if they meet the minimum standards, can be called for interview very quickly.

Through the CPS Law Scholarship Scheme, CPS Merseyside has three former caseworkers who are now legal trainees, two of whom will qualify as lawyers before the end of the year and will be eligible to apply for posts as crown prosecutors.

Criminal Justice (Bexley)

John Austin: To ask the Solicitor-General (1) if she will list members of the Bexley Criminal Justice Board; if she will list the *(a)* dates and *(b)* attendees of meetings held in the past 12 months; and if she will make a statement; [179564]

(2) what representations she has received for the transfer of responsibility for Bexley from the Croydon Prosecution Service Office to the City Office; and if she will make a statement; [179565]

(3) what assessment she has made of the discharge committals, discontinuance and ineffective trial rates in *(a)* Bexley and *(b)* London; and if she will make a statement; [179566]

(4) if she will visit Bexley magistrates court and Bexley division of the Metropolitan police to discuss the role and performance of the Crown Prosecution Service. [179567]

The Solicitor-General: I understand that the hon. Member has now received my letter which answers these points. For the benefit of Members, I will place a copy of that letter in the Library.

Departmental Annual Report

Norman Lamb: To ask the Solicitor-General how much the production of the Law Officers' Department's latest annual report cost; how many copies were printed; how many copies of it were sold at its cover price; to whom copies of the report have been provided free of charge; and how many copies were provided free of charge. [171148]

The Solicitor-General: The Law Officers' Departmental Report 2004 was presented to Parliament on 30 April 2004.

The Stationery Office (TSO) provided the Law Officers' Departments with 240 copies of the Report, at a cost of £5,160. Other costs of printing further copies are met directly by TSO as the publisher, and do not fall to the Government.

The Law Officers' Departments will send a small number of copies free of charge to other Government Departments and to members of the public on request.

The Departmental Report is being made available on the Law Officers' Departmental websites and is on sale at TSO at a cover price of £12.25.

There has been insufficient time since publication for TSO to provide any meaningful information on the number of reports sold at cover price.

The Crown Prosecution Service also published an Annual Report from the Director of Public Prosecutions to the Attorney-General. The 2002–03 Annual Report from the Director of Public Prosecutions to the Attorney-General cost the Crown Prosecution Service £35740.80 to produce 4,000 copies. Copies of the Annual Report were distributed throughout the Crown Prosecution Service's 42 geographical Areas in England and Wales. In addition, copies of the Annual Report were sent by the Director, the Chief Executive and others at

CPS Headquarters, to other Government Departments and criminal justice system partners. Free copies of the Annual Report will also have been distributed to key members of the community in local Areas, visitors to Crown Prosecution Service offices and as part of publicity or careers campaigns in our Areas.

The most recent report published by HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate covered the period 1 October 2001 to 30 September 2002. It was published on 5 February 2003. Publication of the report was handled by TSO who met the costs of printing and publication. Information about those costs is not available to HMCPSI. The company used its commercial judgment as to the total number of copies printed.

TSO supplied 650 copies to HMCPSI at a cost of £11,580.40—a small number remain in stock. The rest were distributed free of charge. The majority were distributed within the Crown Prosecution Service, Government Departments, other organisations and individuals associated with the criminal justice system such as the judiciary and Chief Constables. Copies were also sent to national media organisations, several academic institutions and other individuals with an interest in the CPS. Additionally, the report is available for download free of charge from the HMCPSI website. HMCPSI does not record how many times or by whom the report has been downloaded.

It is estimated that 260 copies were sold at cover price (£15.70) by TSO. None were sold by HMCPSI.

The cost of producing the Serious Fraud Office Annual Report 2002–03 was £31,243: 2,200 copies were printed. Of these 350 were retained by The Stationery Office limited for sale mostly to a subscription list, at a cover price of £13.60: 186 were sold. The remaining 1,850 copies were used by the SFO throughout the year.

Complementary copies were sent by the SFO on the publication date to police organisations and selected Government authorities and judicial bodies in the UK and overseas and to appropriate educational establishments and members of the press.

Sufficient copies are held in stock for distribution throughout the year.

Genocide

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Solicitor-General what definition the Government use of the crime of genocide. [179539]

The Solicitor-General: By virtue of section 51 of the International Criminal Court Act 2001 it is an offence under the law of England and Wales for a person to commit genocide. "Genocide" is defined in section 50(1) of the 2001 Act by reference to the definition of genocide in Article 6 of the Statute of the International Criminal Court, done at Rome on 17 July 1998. Article 6 of the ICC Statute, which is set out in Schedule 8 to the 2001 Act, states that "genocide" means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

(a) killing members of the group;

(b) causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;

(c) deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;

(d) imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;

(e) forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Equivalent provision is made in relation to Northern Ireland by section 58 of the 2001 Act and in relation to Scotland by section 1 of the International Criminal Court (Scotland) Act 2001.

TREASURY

Rochdale Constituency

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the level of unemployment was in each year since 1997 in the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale, broken down by *(a)* age, *(b)* gender and *(c)* ethnicity; [178550]

(2) if he will make a statement on the levels of long-term *(a)* adult and *(b)* youth employment in the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale over the last seven years; and what percentage of long-term (i) adult and (ii) youth employed are (A) women and (B) of Asian origin; [178540]

(3) if he will make a statement on the levels of long-term *(a)* adult and *(b)* youth employment of people of ethnic minorities in the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale over the last seven years. [178541]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, and I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Ms Lorna Fitzsimons, dated 21 June 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions about unemployment in the Parliamentary Constituency of Rochdale. (178550, 178540 and 178541).

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions.

Table 1 overleaf gives the available information for levels of unemployment by gender in the Rochdale Parliamentary Constituency covering the 12 months ending February of 1997 and of each year from 2000 to 2003.

Estimates are taken from the Office for National Statistics' Labour Force Survey (LFS). As with any statistical sample survey, estimates for the LFS are subject to sampling variability.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (ISA) for local areas including Parliamentary Constituencies. Table 2 overleaf gives the annual average number of ISA claimants, and the average number claiming for over 12 months by gender and age group in the Rochdale Constituency for each year since 1997 to 2003.

Table 1: Unemployment levels in the Rochdale parliamentary constituency, 12 months ending February of the years 1997, 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003 (not seasonally adjusted)

thousands

	Total	Male	Female
1997	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—
2000	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—
2001	3	2	[1]—
2002	3	2	[1]—
2003	4	2	[1]—

[1] Estimates not shown owing to the small sample size.

Source:
ONS Labour Force Survey

Table 2: Annual average number of JSA claimants, and those claiming for over 12 months, by gender and age group Rochdale parliamentary constituency, 1997–2003

		Male		
	All ages	18 to 24 years	25 to 49 years	50 plus years
All claimants				
1997	2,448	678	1,451	294
1998	2,297	651	1,344	281
1999	2,128	560	1,278	268
2000	1,782	491	1,052	217
2001	1,598	445	963	177
2002	1,672	451	1,006	198
2003	1,685	483	960	215
People claiming for over 12 months (computerised claims only)				
1997	669	107	462	100
1998	571	82	391	99
1999	474	23	343	108
2000	338	7	263	69
2001	237	[1]—	185	49
2002	218	[1]—	164	51
2003	223	[1]—	156	65

		Female		
	All ages	18 to 24 years	25 to 49 years	50 plus years
All claimants				
1997	597	288	216	77
1998	583	267	225	75
1999	536	230	221	69
2000	464	207	191	53
2001	409	179	165	47
2002	442	195	183	52
2003	470	207	186	57
People claiming for over 12 months (computerised claims only)				
1997	103	37	42	23
1998	90	36	38	17
1999	67	8	41	19
2000	51	[1]—	34	15
2001	35	[1]—	24	10
2002	25	[1]—	15	8
2003	33	[1]—	21	11

		All		
	All ages	18 to 24 years	25 to 49 years	50 plus years
All claimants				
1997	3,045	966	1,667	371
1998	2,880	918	1,568	355
1999	2,663	789	1,498	337
2000	2,246	697	1,244	270
2001	2,007	625	1,128	224
2002	2,114	646	1,189	250
2003	2,155	690	1,146	272
People claiming for over 12 months (computerised claims only)				
1997	772	145	504	123
1998	661	117	428	115
1999	541	30	384	127
2000	389	9	296	84
2001	272	5	209	58
2002	242	[1]—	179	59
2003	256	[1]—	177	75

[1] These figures are not shown to protect the confidentiality of individuals.

Source:
Jobcentre Plus administrative system.

Counterfeit Notes

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent estimate he has made of the number of counterfeit notes in circulation; and what steps he is taking to make counterfeiting more difficult. [179221]

Ruth Kelly: The Bank of England, which produces and issues most UK banknotes, records the number of counterfeit notes discovered in circulation. In recent years, this number has remained at a very small fraction of 1 per cent. of the total number of notes in circulation.

The Bank ensures that its notes are designed to discourage counterfeiters. The current series of notes in circulation have certain security features, which not only make it difficult to counterfeit notes, but also make it easy to determine whether or not a note is genuine.

To assist the public with identifying counterfeit notes, a leaflet entitled "Know your Banknotes" is available upon request or downloadable from the Bank's website. This describes the identity and security features of current notes, and provides advice on how to check for counterfeits.

When notes are introduced or withdrawn from circulation, this is advertised prominently in the national and local press and via posters and leaflets. This also minimises the risk of counterfeits of old series notes being passed and accepted.

Death Certificates

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether death certificates issued in other EU countries are admissible in the UK; and if he will make a statement. [179571]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the General Registrar for England and Wales, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Robertson dated 21 June 2004:

As Registrar General for England and Wales I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking whether death certificates issued in other EU countries are admissible in the UK. (179571)

Certificates issued by doctors certifying the cause of death in other EU countries can't be accepted by a registrar in England or Wales for the purposes of formally registering a death. Registrars may register only those deaths which have taken place in their district and which have been certified by a registered medical practitioner who looked after the deceased during their last illness, or by a coroner.

Certificates of deaths registered in other EU countries may be admissible in the UK for more general purposes. It is for the organisation requesting the death certificate to be satisfied that it meets their requirements.

Employment (North-west)

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many new jobs have been created in *(a)* St Helens South, *(b)* St Helens, *(c)* Merseyside and *(d)* the North West in each year since 2001. [178113]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Shaun Woodward dated 21 June 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about jobs created in the North West. (178113)

While statistics of new jobs created are not available explicitly, statistics from surveys enable comparisons to be made of net changes in numbers of jobs from year to year.

The attached table shows the information requested, relating to jobs in St Helen's South Parliamentary Constituency, St Helen's unitary authority, the Merseyside Government office region and the North West Government office region for 2000 to 2002.

The majority of the increase in jobs in St Helen's South seen between 2000 and 2002 occurred in the real estate, renting and business activities sector. At least one major business site in this sector was opened in the area during the period.

Total number of employees[1], and annual change in number—Areas as shown, 2000, 2001 and 2002

	Number of employees			*Change*	*Change*
Workplace location	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2000–01*[2]	*2001–02*[2]
St Helen's South	34,900	42,000	44,700	7,100	2,800
St Helen's unitary authority	56,100	63,400	67,200	7,300	3,800
Merseyside	503,100	526,800	550,300	23,700	23,500
North West	2,846,000	2,894,700	2,974,100	48,700	79,400

[1] Employee jobs only, not self-employed jobs
[2] The change figures have been rounded to the nearest hundred separately from rounded levels for individual years
Source:
Annual Business Inquiry (ABI)

Environmentally Sustainable Purchasing

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of progress by Government departments in implementing recommendations of the Office of Government Commerce paper Quick Wins in Greening Government Purchasing and the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs/Office of Government Commerce Joint Note on Environmental issues in Purchasing; and if he will make a statement. [179706]

Mr. Boateng: Ministers in all departments have signed up to the approach outlined in the Office of Government Commerce paper Quick Wins in Greening Government Purchasing and the DEFRA/OGC Joint Note on Environmental issues in Purchasing. DEFRA will be collecting information on implementation from all departments for inclusion in the Sustainable Development in Government Report, which will be published in the autumn.

Pensioner Concessions

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will fund *(a)* free old age pensioner travel and *(b)* free television licences for all old age pensioners at the next budget. [179525]

Ruth Kelly: The Chancellor of the Exchequer receives many proposals for measures to include in his Budget.

The Government are committed to ensuring that older and disabled people have full opportunities to maintain their independence and utilise our public transport network while improving local transport for all.

The Transport Act 2000 brought in the statutory minimum requirement for local authority concessionary fares to ensure that older and disabled people are entitled to half fares or better on their local bus services, with no additional charge being levied for the pass.

Anything provided above the statutory minimum is a matter for local authorities.

We believe that in England the current system offers the best combination of ensuring that pensioners receive a full opportunity to benefit from public transport, while also allowing decisions to be made that fully reflect local circumstances.

The Chancellor announced the introduction of free TV licences for those aged over 75, in his pre-Budget report in November 2000. Over 3.5 million pensioner households benefit from access to free TV licences, at a cost of some £380 million a year.

Road Fuel Duty

Mr. Blizzard: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the cost of defraying for a year a one pence per litre increase in duty on petrol and diesel. [179147]

John Healey: Estimates of the revenue yield from an increase in road fuel duty rates were published in table 6 of the "Tax Ready Reckoner and Tax Reliefs" alongside the 2003 pre-Budget report, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House.

Mr. Blizzard: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much additional tax revenue accrues to the Treasury from each one pence rise in *(a)* the market price of crude oil and *(b)* the pump price of (i) petrol and (ii) diesel. [179148]

John Healey: The overall impact of higher oil and road fuel prices on tax revenues and the public finances is complex as they will increase some tax revenues and Government expenditures while decreasing others, depending on their wider impact on the economy in general. Reliable estimates of the impact of changes in prices are not available.

Suicide

Mr. Willis: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many suicides of *(a)* under 18s and *(b)* those aged 14 to 18 were recorded in the UK in each year since 1997. [178941]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 15 June 2004]:* The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Phil Willis, dated 21 June 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning how many suicides of *(a)* under 18s and *(b)* those aged 14 to 18 were recorded in the UK in each year since 1997. (178941)

The most recent available data are for the calendar year 2002. Figures for each year from 1997 to 2002 are given in the attached table.

Number of deaths at ages under 18 from intentional self harm[1] and injury undetermined whether accidentally or purposely inflicted[2], United Kingdom, 1997 to 2002[3]

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Intentional self harm at ages under 18						
(a) All	48	64	55	75	50	64
(b) 14 and over	47	60	52	70	47	59
Injury undetermined whether accidentally or purposely inflicted[4] at ages under 18						
(a) All	68	59	56	63	46	49
(b) 14 and over	47	41	40	47	35	36

[1] The cause of death for intentional self harm was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision, (ICD-9) codes E950-E959and the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes X60-X84. ICD-JO was introduced in Scotland in 2000 and in Northern Ireland, and England and Wales in 2001.

[2] The cause of death for injury undetermined whether accidentally or purposely inflicted was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) codes E980-E989 for Scotland and Northern Ireland, and E980-E989 excluding E988.8 for England and Wales, and the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes Y10-Y34 for Scotland and Northern Ireland, and Y10-Y34 excluding Y33.9 where the Coroner's verdict was pending for England and Wales.

[3] Figures are for deaths registered in each calendar year for Scotland and Northern Ireland and for deaths occurring in each calendar year for England and Wales.

[4] In routine statistics, ONS defines suicides as deaths from suicide and deaths from 'injury undetermined whether accidentally or purposely inflicted'. Past research has shown that the majority of deaths in which the intent could not be determined (Coroner's open verdicts in England and Wales) in adults are cases where the harm is self-inflicted but there was insufficient evidence to prove that the deceased deliberately intended to kill themselves. The proportion among children is unknown although it is unlikely that any very young children deliberately intended to kill themselves.

CABINET OFFICE

Emergency Planning

Mr. Flook: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what the budget was in each of the last three years for each local authority in the South West responsible for emergency planning; and what the budget is in each case for 2004–05. [177193]

Mr. Raynsford: Budget estimates of expenditure on emergency planning as reported by each authority in the South West region are tabled as follows.

Budget estimates of net current expenditure on emergency planning

£000

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Bath and North East Somerset UA	82	123	255	251
Bournemouth UA	70	70	70	79
Bristol UA	118	120	252	197
Caradon	14	15	12	5
Carrick	0	0	0	1
Cheltenham	3	0	13	19
Christchurch	22	23	18	16
Cornwall	277	276	356	369
Cotswold	13	18	13	15
Devon	259	268	339	460
Dorset	240	285	290	290
East Devon	32	54	44	50
East Dorset	8	9	8	9
Exeter	23	29	28	26
Forest of Dean	0	15	8	16
Gloucester	15	15	11	11
Gloucestershire	307	341	392	236
Isles of Scilly	55	59	65	56
Kennet	61	58	27	70
Kerrier	0	0	0	0
Mendip	0	0	0	0
Mid Devon	25	21	27	26
North Cornwall	0	0	0	0
North Devon	22	50	38	42
North Dorset	30	11	5	7
North Somerset UA	53	70	122	78
North Wiltshire	18	21	7	22
Penwith	0	0	0	0
Plymouth UA	157	152	156	185
Poole UA	21	22	23	92
Purbeck	17	16	15	15
Restormel	0	0	0	0
Salisbury	7	7	6	6
Sedgemoor	13	36	36	33
Somerset	180	230	229	259
South Gloucestershire UA	89	91	100	88
South Hams	37	39	42	43
South Somerset	20	17	5	3
Stroud	10	12	15	23
Swindon UA	88	92	92	4
Taunton Deane	2	2	2	2
Teignbridge	1	1	1	2
Tewkesbury	14	25	22	12
Torbay UA	163	129	126	147
Torridge	17	10	9	14
West Devon	0	0	0	8
West Dorset	33	23	23	25
West Somerset	0	0	0	0
West Wiltshire	2	4	7	6
Weymouth and Portland	14	13	9	16
Wiltshire	183	224	257	252

Note:

The data are taken from the RA (budget) form; these forms are completed each year by individual local authorities.

Mr. Miliband: The only private finance initiative/public private partnership that my Department has entered into is the Connexions Card, which is a PPP. It has not been subject to refinancing.

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the *(a)* book value of the stakeholding, *(b)* onward sale price and *(c)* arrangements for sharing any windfall gain from subsequent refinancing arrangements are for each of the private finance initiative and public private partnership schemes his Department has entered into where there has been an onward sale of the private sector stakeholding into secondary market. [179064]

Mr. Miliband: The only private finance initiative/public private partnership scheme in my Department is the Connexions Card which has not been subject to onward sale into a secondary market.

Physical Education

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of schoolchildren are meeting the school sporting target of participating in two hours minimum a week of sport or physical education. [178443]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The results of the 2003/04 PE, School Sport and Club Links survey indicated that 62 per cent. of school children within a School Sport Partnership spend a minimum of two hours in a typical week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum. A copy of the full report has already been placed in the Libraries of both Houses. The survey is used to measure progress towards meeting our target to increase the percentage of pupils spending a minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum to 75 per cent. by 2006.

School Funding

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what *(a)* proportion and *(b)* amount of funding for secondary schools in England comes from the (i) Delegated Budget, (ii) Standards Fund, (iii) School Standards Grant and (iv) post-16 Learning and Skills Council funding streams. [171084]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is contained within the following table:

LEAs' planned expenditure for secondary schools in England in 2003–04

	£ million	*Percentage of Total Schools Budget*
Schools Budget	12,112	92.63
of which:		
(i) Individual Schools Budget	9,985	82.44
(ii) Total Standards Fund	920	7.60
(iii) Schools Standards Grant	314	2.59
£894 million or 7.38 per cent. of the Total Schools Budget is additional expenditure outside of the areas covered by (i), (ii) or (iii) above		
Memorandum items (already included in totals above):		
Sixth Form—Allocation from LSC for 16+ funding for secondary schools (included in (i))	1,303	10.76
Expenditure covered by LSC Grant (included in lines within Total Schools Budget)		
Sixth form element included in provision for pupils with statements	8	0.07
Sixth form element included in fees for pupils independent special schools and abroad	3	0.03
Sixth form element included in fees to independent schools for pupils without statements	1	0.01
(iv) Total post-16 LSC funding streams	1,315	10.86

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from Local Education Authorities' 2003–04 Section 52 Budget Statement Table 1 submitted to the DfES. Gross figures are provided rather than net as income cannot be split by phase of education. All figures are as recorded in LEAs' Section 52 Budget statements. Figures may not sum due to rounding.

2. In addition to the Total Schools Budget for secondary schools £3,012 million was spent on total LEA central functions and part of this would have been used to support secondary education.

3. Within the schools' budget the amount available for delegation to schools after provision has been made for retained items is known as the Individual Schools Budget (ISB). ISB for secondary schools is £9,985 million of which £1,303 million is supported by the LSC for the funding of education for pupils in Sixth Forms.

4. Total Standards Fund includes: Standards Fund allocation—Revenue (the Standards Fund allocation that the authority expects to devolve to its schools); Standards Fund—Non-Devolved (Standards Fund allocations not yet planned to be devolved to schools or to be spent centrally on items in the schools block; and Specific Formula Grants—Excellence in Cities (expenditure pursuant to a partnership agreement (under the DfES programme known as "Excellence in Cities") made between the authority, the Secretary of State and one or more of the authority's schools. In previous years this was not a separate line item but was recorded under the Devolved Standards Fund).

5. Total post-16 LSC funding streams comprises of the memorandum items of expenditure included within the Total Schools Budget. The allocation from LSC for 16+ funding is included in (i) within the ISB. The sixth form elements of the provision for pupils with statements, the fees to independent schools for pupils without statements and the fees for pupils at independent special schools and abroad

is included in other lines within the Total Schools Budget. Consequently the Total Schools Budget for secondary schools comprises of the total of (i) to (iii) plus additional expenditure of £894 million for secondary schools on areas such as SEN, education out of school, school meals, school based strategic management, non-standards fund grants and capital expenditure from revenue.

School Leavers (Qualifications)

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils left school aged 16 years with no formal qualifications in each year since 1997. [179447]

Mr. Miliband: The percentages of pupils reaching the end of compulsory education but not achieving any passes at GCSE/GNVQ in each year since 1997 are shown in the following table:

	Percentage of 15-year-olds not achieving GCSE/GNVQ passes
2003	5.2
2002	5.4
2001	5.5
2000	5.6
1999	6.0
1998	6.6
1997	7.7

Pupils with no GCSE/GNVQ passes may have achieved passes in other approved qualifications such as entry level qualifications, key skills, national vocational and vocationally related qualifications.

Skills Gap

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discussions his Department has had with employers *(a)* groups and *(b)* federations regarding the skills gap. [179418]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Department has regular exchanges with employer groups and federations about skills gap and skills shortage issues. This was of crucial importance in the development of the Skills Strategy—"21st Century Skills, Realising Our Potential" when we consulted all our partners and stakeholders. The Skills Strategy is now being taken forward by a new Skills Alliance. This brings together the social and economic partners including the CBI, TUC and Small Business Council with Government and our key delivery agencies.

Special Schools (Greater London)

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many special schools there are in each of the education authorities in the Greater London area. [179051]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is shown in the table.

Special schools[1]: Number of schools—January 2004 (provisional)—local education authorities within Greater London

	Number of schools
London	156
Inner London	68
Camden	6
City of London	0
Hackney	5
Hammersmith and Fulham	5
Haringey	4
Islington	3
Kensington and Chelsea	2
Lambeth	6
Lewisham	7
Newham	2
Southwark	9
Tower Hamlets	7
Wandsworth	10
Westminster	2
Outer London	88
Barking and Dagenham	1
Barnet	4
Bexley	5
Brent	5
Bromley	6
Croydon	6
Ealing	6
Enfield	6
Greenwich	5
Harrow	4
Havering	3
Hillingdon	8
Hounslow	5
Kingston upon Thames	3
Merton	3
Redbridge	5
Richmond upon Thames	2
Sutton	5
Waltham Forest	6

[1] Includes maintained and non-maintained special schools.
Source:
Annual Schools' Census

School Sport

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding is available for school sport in each year up to 2005–06; and how the funding is to be allocated. [177650]

Mr. Miliband: The following table sets out the Department for Education and Skills' PE and school sport budget between 1996–97 and 2002–03 and the projected budget between 2003–04 and 2005–06.

£ million

Financial Year	*DfES PE and school sport budget*
1996–97	0
1997–98	1.9
1998–99	3.6
1999–2000	4.8
2000–01	9.5
2001–02	14.6
2002–03	23.5
2003–04	46
2004–05	108
2005–06	155

The national PE, School Sport and Club Links strategy brings together eight individual but interlinked work strands. The following table sets out details for each of the work strands and their budgets.

Work strand	Budget 2003–04 to 2005–06
Specialist Sports Colleges Programme	£11 5 million
School Sport Partnerships (formerly the School Sport Co-ordinator programme) PE and School Sport Professional Development Programme PE and Sport Gifted and Talented Programme QCA PE and School Sport Investigation Swimming Strategy	£224 million (total for all five work strands)
Step Into Sport Programme	£12 million (includes £2 million from the Home Office)
Club Links Programme	£10 million

In addition, related work to enhance Community Club Development (£60 million between 2003–04 and 2005–06), Coaching (£28 million between 2003–04 and 2005–06) and the Sporting Playgrounds Programme (£10 million between 2003–04 and 2004–05) is supporting the national strategy and the delivery of the sports Public Service Agreement target.

Specialist Schools

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether funding for specialist school status is allocated on a per pupil basis. [179577]

Mr. Miliband: Yes, in terms of recurrent funding. Each specialist school also receives a one-off capital grant—irrespective of pupil numbers—to enhance the accommodation, facilities and/or equipment in the specialist subjects.

Student Loans

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate his Department has made of the number of university graduates making repayments of nine per cent. of gross income over £10,000 to the Student Loans Company Limited in each year since 2001. [179445]

Alan Johnson: In general, repayments of income-contingent loans are collected through the tax system. Repayments are notified to the Student Loans Company (SLC) after the end of the tax year, after which time has to be allowed for SLC to reconcile the repayments notified with their records. There will therefore be some borrowers who have repaid their accounts in financial years 2001–02 and 2002–03, but this will not have been reported yet. Therefore data for those years understates the true number of borrowers making repayments. However, latest information from the SLC shows the following:

Thousands

Tax year	Number of income-contingent loan borrowers making repayments[1]
2000–01	10.4
2001–02 (provisional)[2]	33.2
2002–03 (Provisional)[2]	114.1

[1] Data exclude those borrowers making voluntary or early repayments.

[2] Data are marked provisional to reflect the retrospective nature of the reporting of repayments through the Inland Revenue.

Source:
The Student Loans Company (SLC)

Borrowers enter repayment status, i.e. are due to make repayments on their loans, in the April after graduating or otherwise leaving their course. No repayments are deducted from income-contingent borrowers with income below £10,000 per year. Borrowers with income-contingent loans can also make voluntary repayments, either in the form of pre-payments before they enter repayment status, or ad-hoc repayments to accelerate their repayments after entering repayment status. These repayments are made directly by the borrower to the SLC. The table shows the number of UK income-contingent loan borrowers who have entered repayment status by tax year. It excludes those who have made early or voluntary repayments.

Teacher Recruitment Managers

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding has been allocated for the *(a)* recruitment, *(b)* training and *(c)* employment of teacher recruitment managers not employed directly by schools in each year since 1997; and how many full-time equivalent recruitment managers there were in each year. [178208]

Mr. Miliband: The table shows the available information since the creation of the recruitment managers scheme in 1998. Those local education authorities (LEAs) that employ recruitment managers receive an average annual grant from the Teacher Training Agency towards recruitment and employment costs. Any training for recruitment managers is funded by LEAs from within their own resources. Their effectiveness in this role has been recognised by Ofsted.

	Recruitment Managers	LEAs covered	Average grant per LEA(£)
2004–05	97	107	50,000
2003–04	97	107	50,000
2002–03	86	105	50,000
2001–02	82	97	55,000
2000–01	67	80	55,000
1999–2000	52	61	55,000
1998–99	17	17	55,000

Teacher Workload

Mr. Dawson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what arrangements he has made to fund teachers' planning, preparation and assessment time. [176555]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 22 June 2004]:* The Government, in common with the other signatories to the National Agreement, believe that much can be achieved through redeploying existing resources.

However, we recognise that some schools will require headroom in their budgets in order to meet the contractual change from September 2005. We shall decide later in the summer what kind of arrangements are needed to underpin the planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) reforms in the school funding system for 2005–06.

To that end, we are currently working with six LEAs and about a dozen schools in each of those LEAs to get a better understanding of their starting points, how they plan to deliver the reforms and to what extent this can be achieved through the redeployment of existing resources.

We will use the information produced in order to review the funding implications of the reforms.

Teachers (Pupil Abuse)

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teachers were investigated for alleged abuse of pupils in each year since 1997; and how many were subsequently *(a)* prosecuted and *(b)* found guilty. [179424]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is not available.

Teaching Posts (Greater London)

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many vacancies for teaching posts there are at schools in the Greater London area. [179033]

Mr. Miliband: The latest vacancy information was published on 29 April in the School Workforce in England statistical first release (SFR09/2004), a copy of which has been placed in the House of Commons Library and can be accessed from the following URL: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000462/index.shtml

West Midlands in Europe

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the work of West Midlands in Europe. [179600]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: West Midlands in Europe is working assiduously to ensure that Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the West Midlands receive an equitable share of the EU Framework Programmes for Research and Development (2002–06)—pan Europe the programmes are worth the sum of €17.5 billion to HEIs.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many employees in his Department have *(a)* signed a formal opt out from and *(b)* are exempt from the Working Time Directive; and how many employees in his Department have recorded hours, including any accruing on a flexitime basis, in excess of the maximum allowed under the Working Time Directive in the last month for which figures are available. [178364]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department is committed to reducing the number of employees who work in excess of the Working Time Directive maximum to an absolute minimum.

64 employees have signed a formal opt out from the Working Time Directive. No employees are exempt. The number of hours that each employee works per week is not kept centrally, therefore the number of hours in excess of the maximum allowed under the Working Time Directive could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

XL Clubs

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discussions his Department has had with the Prince's Trust regarding XL clubs in schools. [179414]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Prince's Trust has had a number of meetings with various officials in the Department in recent months. Although XL clubs have been mentioned, none of the meetings have been held specifically to discuss this issue.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 23 June 2004

TRANSPORT

Irish-registered Vehicles

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer to question 178952, whether it is a requirement in the UK that Irish-registered vehicles display up-to-date Irish road tax; and whether there have been prosecutions in the UK for not displaying Irish road tax on an Irish-registered vehicle. [179995]

Mr. Jamieson: Vehicles that are circulating temporarily between European Union member states must comply with the registration and licensing requirements of the home country. Enforcement of offences is undertaken by the police. Figures for prosecutions against foreign-registered vehicles are not available.

Ports Police

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many staff from ports police forces were employed at UK seaports and airports in each of the last five years. [177176]

Mr. Jamieson: We do not have a breakdown available for each of the last five years as the port authorities are not required to supply employment figures to the Department. However, information collected specifically for our review of ports police shows that, in 2003, the seven port police forces in England and Wales employed a total of 198 sworn in officers (exclusive of civilian support staff). No ports police were employed at airports.

Road Works (Safety)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans his Department has to ensure the safety of *(a)* workers and *(b)* drivers in areas of extensive road works in the Midlands this year. [179825]

Mr. Jamieson *[holding answer 22 June 2004]:* The Highways Agency has established the Safer Temporary Traffic Management Operations Initiative to improve safety for both road workers and road users and to raise safety standards in the industry. This initiative involves the Health and Safety Executive, the Scottish Executive, Northern Ireland Roads Service and industry representatives, and is producing improved safety guidance for road workers and is ensuring that consistent best practice is employed.

The initiative is developing and testing new and innovative technology, equipment and procedures that could offer safety benefits for both road workers and road users. The Highways Agency is working with contractors and HSE to produce training videos for road workers and their employers.

Safety of workers and drivers is given high priority when any road works are undertaken. The Highways Agency is promoting a "Safer Driving Through Road Works" campaign aimed at increasing driver awareness of the need to drive safely through road works. The campaign has secured a significant amount of television airtime and more than 100,000 car window stickers reinforcing the message have been distributed. The Agency's information leaflets include six key messages for driving safely through road works.

The message was further reinforced in a recent "Traffic Information Leaflet" about roadworks in the Midlands, which has been widely distributed, and through a video shown at various shows including the Motor Show.

Safety Barriers (Motorways)

Mr. Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of safety barriers on the motorway system have been *(a)* replaced and *(b)* renovated in each of the last five years. [179662]

Mr. Jamieson: Details of the lengths of safety barriers that have been replaced or renewed over the last five years are not available. The total length of safety barriers on England's motorway network is over 3,600 miles. Based on a sample maintenance area, it is estimated that about 50 miles are currently replaced due to accident damage or renewed through scheduled maintenance programmes each year.

TREASURY

Currency Exchange Programme

Harry Cohen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the UK's involvement is in the currency exchange programme; who is contracted for it; how much they *(a)* have been paid to date and *(b)* are contracted to receive; and if he will make a statement. [179800]

Ruth Kelly: Officials from HM Treasury and the Bank of England provided technical expertise to assist with the planning and delivery of the currency exchange programme in Iraq. UK firms were also involved in the printing of the new banknotes and delivery of the programme, the total cost of which was US Dollars 160 million. Detailed information on payments to individual firms has not been released in order to protect contractual confidentiality.

Employment Statistics

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of the working age population is economically active; and what the figures have been for the last 30 years for which figures are available. [179726]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Laurence Robertson, dated 23 June 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about economic activity. (179726)

The attached table gives estimates of economic activity rates (persons employed or unemployed expressed as a percentage of the total population of working age) for the 3 month periods ending May each year from 1984 to 2004. Information is not available for earlier periods on a consistent basis. These Labour Force Survey (LFS) estimates are seasonally adjusted.

As with any sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to sampling variability.

Economic activity rates[1] of working age population[2], United Kingdom, 1984 to 2004 (three month period ending May of each year)

	Percentage of working age population[2] economically active
1984	78.1
1985	78.6
1986	78.7
1987	79.1
1988	79.8
1989	80.3
1990	80.5
1991	80.0
1992	79.1
1993	78.6
1994	78.5
1995	78.2
1996	78.4
1997	78.5
1998	78.3
1999	78.7
2000	78.9
2001	78.6
2002	78.6
2003	78.7
2004[3]	78.6

[1] Seasonally adjusted.
[2] Men aged 16–64 and women aged 16–59.
[3] Three months ending April 2004.

Butterfield Review

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he expects the next Butterfield Review to report. [176426]

The Solicitor-General: I have been asked to reply.

I cannot at present give the hon. Member a date on which Mr. Justice Butterfield is expected to deliver his interim Report to the Attorney-General and the Economic Secretary to the Treasury, however, I will keep the hon. Member informed.

Carers

Helen Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the cost of allowing carers of elderly or disabled people to claim working tax credit on the same basis as parents. [179245]

Dawn Primarolo: An estimate of the cost of allowing carers for elderly or disabled people to claim working tax credit on the same basis as parents would depend on the definition of a carer.

The Government are aware that individuals with caring responsibilities may have constraints on their ability to work because of those responsibilities and will keep under review for the longer term whether the tax credit system can be developed to take account of these constraints.

Child Tax Credit

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families are eligible for child tax credit in Chorley; and how many are in receipt of child tax credit. [180404]

Dawn Primarolo: For the number of recipient families, I refer my hon. Friend to my answer of 15 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 98W, to my hon. Friend the Member for Burton (Mrs. Dean).

No estimate is available of the number of families in Chorley who are eligible for the child tax credit.

Deprived Children

Helen Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many children in low income households *(a)* live within the 20 per cent. of wards which are classified as most deprived and *(b)* live outside those wards. [179242]

Mr. Pond: I have been asked to reply.

The information is not available in the format requested. Specific information regarding low income for Great Britain is available in "Households Below Average Income 1994–95 to 2002–03".

The fifth annual "Opportunity for all" report (Cm 5956) sets out the Government's strategy for tackling poverty and social exclusion and presents information on the indicators used to measure progress against this strategy. Both documents are available in the Library.

Employment (North-west)

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the percentage change has been in unemployment in *(a)* St. Helens, South, *(b)* St. Helens, *(c)* Merseyside and *(d)* the north-west since 2001. [178112]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Shaun Woodward, dated 23 June 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about the percentage change in unemployment. (178112)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. Seasonally adjusted data for regions are published monthly. The most recent figures for the North West show that, between January to March 2001 and January to March 2004, unemployment fell by 17,000 or 10.2 per cent.

Data for areas smaller than regions are available less frequently and changes cannot be measured reliably. The attached table 1 gives the estimates of the levels in Merseyside, St. Helens South Parliamentary Constituency and in the St. Helens Local Authority district between the 12 months ending February 2002 and February 2003, the latest data for which information is available. Comparable figures for the North West are included in the table.

As with any sample survey, estimates from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) are subject to sampling variability.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for local areas including Parliamentary Constituencies. Table 2 gives the number of JSA claimants and

changes in the St. Helens South Constituency, St. Helens Local Authority District, Merseyside and the North West region between May 2001 and May 2004.

Table 1: Level of unemployment, and percentage change in level, areas as shown, 2002 and 2003[1]

Thousand, percentage

Area	Level of unemployment 2002	2003	Percentage change 2002–03
North West[2]	162	171	5.6
Merseyside	45	43	-3.7
St. Helens South (parliamentary constituency)	2	2	[3]
St. Helens (local authority district)	5	4	[3]

[1] 12 month periods ending in February of each year.
[2] Includes Merseyside.
[3] The sampling variability on the estimates is too great to provide meaningful estimates of changes.
Source:
ONS Labour Force Survey annual datasets

Table 2: Number of claimants of jobseekers' allowance, and percentage change, areas as shown, 2001 and 2004

Area	Number of JSA claimant May 2001	May 2004	Percentage change Percentage
North West[1]	127,073	101,604	-20.0
Merseyside	40,318	31,468	-219
St. Helens South (parliamentary constituency)	2,246	1,661	-26.0
St. Helens (local authority district)	4,059	3,011	-25.8

[1] Includes Merseyside.
Source:
Jobcentre Plus administrative system.

Fuel Prices (Revenue)

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much estimated additional tax revenue the Treasury has gained from the higher fuel prices paid by the public in the last month for which figures are available. [179772]

John Healey: Monthly figures on fuel duty receipts are published in the "Customs and Exercise Hydrocarbon Oils Bulletin", a copy of which is available on the UK trade information website (www.uktradeinfo.com). Road fuel duties are charged at a fixed amount per litre and higher road fuel prices generally reduce revenues from fuel duties as they result in lower fuel consumption. The impact of higher oil prices on overall tax revenues and the public finances is complex, and will depend on their wider impact on the economy in general, including the effect on factors such as profitability and retail prices.

Housing

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 17 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 725W, on housing, if he will list the costs included in the figure given for the average cost of a new build dwelling for social rent in England in 2003–04. [179191]

Keith Hill: The average cost of a new build dwelling for social rent of £116,000 includes land acquisition of £25,000, construction costs of £78,000. The remainder of £13,000 can be attributed to costs such as site development/pre-works and on-costs.

Local Government Funding

Mr. Luff: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the conclusion of Professors Oswald and Blanchflower, on page 4 of the second report on Calculating an Appropriate Regional Funding Adjustment for Worcestershire on the stance of the Office of National Statistics on access for researchers to check the Government's calculations relating to the Area Cost Adjustment. [177066]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Peter Luff, dated 23 June 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question on the conclusion of Professors Oswald and Blanchflower on the stance of the Office of National Statistics on allowing access for researchers to check the Government's calculations relating to the Area Cost Adjustment. (177066),

Professors Oswald and Blanchflower conclude that a decision has been made by ONS not to release micro-data from the New Earnings Survey (NES) and the Labour Force Survey (LFS) in order to prevent researchers from checking the government's calculations of the Regional Funding Adjustment. No such decision has been made. On the contrary, ONS policy is to support statistical research in the academic community by supplying micro-data in as much detail as possible, within any legal constraints and with respect to the duty of confidence owed to survey respondents.

Access to confidential NES micro-data is covered by legislation, including the Statistics of Trade Act (1947), and there is no provision to allow access for the research that Professors Oswald and Blanchflower would like to perform. Non-disclosive, fully anonymised NES micro-data is not covered by legislation can be provided to researchers on request. However, the measures taken to prevent disclosure include the removal of small area geographical indicators, which may make the data unsuitable for Professors Oswald and Blanchflower's purposes.

ONS offers secondments to researchers working on behalf of ONS for purposes consistent with the aims of National Statistics and of benefit to ONS. As secondees to ONS, these researchers may use the ONS Business Data Linking research facility which holds identifiable, disclosive, disaggregated NES datasets. Professors Oswald and Blanchflower may wish to explore this option further and should contact Prabhat Vaze at ONS (telephone 020 7533 5905) for further information.

The Labour Force Survey is voluntary, and not governed by legislation. However, information collected in the survey is confidential and subject to the common law duty of confidentiality and the Data Protection Act (1998). The obligation of confidentiality is reinforced by a pledge given to survey respondents, which states that no identifiable information they provide will be passed to any government department or member of the public.

Non-disclosive, fully anonymised LFS micro-datasets are available at the UK Data Archive and are available to the academic research community. However, as for the NES, small area geographical indicators have been removed to prevent disclosure, which may make the data unsuitable for Professors Oswald and Blanchflower's purposes. The Business Data Linking research facility does not presently hold any LFS microdata.

Supporting research is one of the aims of National Statistics, but data access arrangements are bound by the National Statistics Code of Practice and Protocols and by legal and professional constraints that may limit access to confidential data. Compliance with these statutory and common law duties does not constitute a decision to prevent researchers' access to data. It is critically important that these obligations are met, in order to maintain public confidence in the integrity of official statistics and the

security of the confidential data on which they are based. Failure to do so would undermine participation in future data collections, reducing the reliability and value of official statistics for all users.

In comparison to National Statistics Institutes in other countries, ONS goes to great lengths to enable the use of its microdata for research purposes. We recognise that access to microdata by reputable researchers (within the legal and professional constraints discussed above) adds much to the value and trust of official statistics. It is therefore disappointing that my office's application of these constraints has been subject to criticism.

Tax Credits

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many payments have been made in respect of *(a)* unnecessary worry and distress and *(b)* postage and telephone expenses in respect of tax credits in each of the last three years; what the total value of these payments was in each of the last three years; and what proportion of these (i) have been and (ii) will be reclaimed from companies providing services or support to the Inland Revenue where a problem with the services or support necessitated the compensatory or special payment. [178603]

Dawn Primarolo: Information in the form requested is not available.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Credit Card Fraud

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the estimated cost of credit card fraud in the UK was in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [179523]

Ms Blears: The Government do not collect figures on the cost of credit card fraud but the Association for Payment Clearing Services (APACS) estimates the cost of all plastic card fraud in 2003 to have been £402.4 million, a decrease of 5 per cent. over the previous year.

Antisocial Behaviour Orders

Ms Atherton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders have been imposed in *(a)* Carrick District and *(b)* Kerrier District. [179268]

Ms Blears: Antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) have been available to the courts since 1 April 1999. From commencement, up to 31 December 2003 (latest available), the Home Office has been notified of one ASBO being issued within the Carrick District and none within the Kerrier District.

British Consul (Bucharest)

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when Ministers in his Department were informed of the suspension of the British Consul in Bucharest. [166553]

Mr. Browne: Ministers were informed on the 24 March that the Consul in Bucharest had been suspended after admitting having sent anonymous emails to the leader of the Opposition. In the information provided to Ministers at that time no detail was provided of the content of the emails and no connection was drawn between this and previous contact between the Consul and the Immigration and Nationality Directorate

Burma

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will prevent British counter-terrorism experts advising Burmese trainees at the new counter-terrorism centre in Semarang, Indonesia. [178839]

Mr. MacShane: I have been asked to reply.

At the Bali Ministerial conference in February 2004, the UK offered to provide counter-terrorism assistance to South East Asian countries through the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation at Semarang. However, British counter-terrorism experts will not advise Burmese trainees at the centre.

Commission for Racial Equality

Mr. Alan Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many organisations applied for funding from the Commission for Racial Equality under the Getting Results Scheme; how many applications were successful; when the Commission for Racial Equality and the Home Office agreed which organisations would receive funds; and for what reasons organisations whose applications were unsuccessful were not informed until 10 May. [173778]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) received 196 applications for consideration under its Getting Results programme; 93 of these were successful, which is five more than last year.

In accordance with section 44 of the Race Relations Act, the CRE is responsible for setting the criteria for its grant programme, and for deciding which applications meet those criteria; the Home Office approves the overall level of funding.

Applicants for section 44 funding were informed of the outcome of their applications on 6 May. Prior to this the Commission for Racial Equality and the Home Office worked together to agree this year's delegated budget and the CRE assessed the large pool of applications it had received in accordance with its criteria.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent discussions he has had with the Chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality about the new equality proposals. [178780]

Fiona Mactaggart: I meet the chairman of the Commission of Racial Equality regularly and discuss a range of issues with him, including the new equality proposals.

Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many crime and disorder reduction partnerships there are; and what assessment he has made of their effectiveness in combating crime. [179431]

Ms Blears: There are 354 Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) in England and 22 Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) in Wales. These partnerships bring together a wide range of key agencies that are engaged in tackling crime and disorder, misuse of drugs and anti-social behaviour. Information from a variety of partnership sources including recorded crime statistics and other police and local authority data, is used to assess the impact of partnerships in reducing crime.

We are developing an integrated performance management framework for the crime reduction and misuse of drugs agendas which will allow us to agree with each Government Office in the regions (GO) and the Welsh Assembly clear targets for the performance of partnerships in their area, and hold them to account for local delivery. This will be underpinned by a targeted programme of work aimed at identifying and addressing the issues which community safety practitioners themselves tell us remain barriers to success.

We have introduced a partnership self-assessment tool, which leads to an improvement planning process, which GOs use to improve partnership performance.

Crime Reduction Programme

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the projects being funded under the Crime Reduction Programme. [179710]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 21 June 2004]:* The Crime Reduction Programme (CRP) was a pioneering multi-million pound intervention programme, which was initially to run for three years from April 1999. Around £340 million was committed to over 1,470 projects in England and Wales under the 20 separate main initiatives which formed the programme, the largest single investment anywhere in the world in an evidence-based approach to crime reduction.

The individual projects are too numerous to list, but the initiatives were as follows:

Initiative	*Project*
Reducing Burglary Initiative	250
Locks for Pensioners	1
Targeted Policing Initiative	59
Summer Schemes/SPLASH	147
Prostitution	11
On Track	26
Treatment of Offenders	1
Drug Arrest Referrals	1
Effective Schools Management	39
Violence Against Women	58
Vehicle Crime	13
Youth Inclusion	70
Sentencing	3
Neighbourhood Wardens	85
Design Against Crime	1
CCTV initiative	684
Project Spectrum	1
Toolkits	22
Suzy Lamplugh Trust	1
Rape Crisis Federation	1
Arson Control	1
Vehicle Crime publicity	1
Partnership Development Fund	1

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which projects being funded under the Crime Reduction Programme are focused on assessing the effectiveness of advocacy, outreach and support measures for victims of domestic violence. [179712]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 21 June 2004]:* The Crime Reduction Programme Violence against Women Initiative was an evidence-led project to find out which approaches were effective in supporting victims and tackling violence against women. In July 2000 34 "Round One" multi-agency victim focused pilot projects were funded and independently evaluated. While many of the projects either directly or indirectly supported victims, the following 14 Round One projects specifically aimed to provide support to women who were victims of domestic violence.

Standing Together Civil Remedies

Gloucester Co-ordinated Community Response

Brighton Intimated Witness Support

Buxton Women's Aid project

Hastings and Rother Rapid Response

St. Austell Support Workers

Warwickshire Domestic Violence Support Workers

Ashram Birmingham project

Tower Hamlets Victim Advocacy and Safety Counselling project

Croydon Advocacy project

Camden Safety Net

Bradford Staying Put

Northampton Domestic Violence Action project

Cheshire Multiple Interventions project.

Departmental Staff (Scotland)

Mr. Lyons: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many Home Office staff are employed in Scotland. [178100]

Fiona Mactaggart: Staff employed by the Home Office within Scotland are shown in the following table. These staff are from the Main Home Office, the Immigration and Nationality Directorate, and the United Kingdom Passport Agency.

Mandate region: Scotland

	Number
Communities Group	11
Immigration and Nationality Directorate	57
UK Immigration Service (IND)	157
UKPA Glasgow	285
Total	510

Distraction Crimes

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many distraction crimes were reported in each of the last 10 years; and how many successful prosecutions followed in each of those years; [178416]

(2) how many distraction burglaries there were in each *(a)* local authority and *(b)* constituency in each of the last 10 years, listed in descending order and according to region. [178419]

Ms Blears: The information is not available as requested.

However, police force data on distraction burglary were collated in special exercises in four recent years. These are available only on a force-by-force basis, as set out in the table. The figures need to be treated with considerable caution as there was no standard definition of distraction burglary and this type of crime is considerably under-reported.

Recorded distraction burglary in England and Wales

Police force area	*1998–99*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Avon and Somerset	378	545	686	542
Bedfordshire	237	172	339	238
Cambridgeshire	197	221	330	211
Cheshire	182	62	104	178
Cleveland	114	118	210	291
Cumbria	Not available	26	26	31
Derbyshire	415	310	336	287
Devon and Cornwall	204	197	151	192
Dorset	69	134	188	196
Durham	203	141	168	162
Dyfed-Powys	35	65	25	23
Essex	91	462	488	349
Gloucestershire	43	121	247	179
Greater Manchester	1,413	1,462	1,312	1,945
Gwent	110	72	152	70
Hampshire	275	70	203	142
Hertfordshire	222	427	676	498
Humberside	133	98	120	258
Kent	207	124	496	387
Lancashire	135	387	190	235
Leicestershire	Not available	257	330	291
Lincolnshire	48	101	83	113
London, City of	0	9	3	1
Merseyside	389	97	317	377
Metropolitan Police	4,491	4,309	5,015	4,567
Norfolk	43	95	122	82
North Wales	124	38	46	54
North Yorkshire	104	175	147	188
Northamptonshire	245	220	194	325
Northumbria	224	238	137	179
Nottinghamshire	389	345	383	323
South Wales	190	170	91	132
South Yorkshire	374	571	724	978
Staffordshire	252	244	295	397
Suffolk	61	100	275	125
Surrey	195	325	309	139
Sussex	485	192	340	290
Thames Valley	599	706	731	685
Warwickshire	119	129	162	163
West Mercia	176	195	270	313
West Midlands	1,401	1,022	1,630	1,126
West Yorkshire	954	968	1,170	1,141
Wiltshire	Not available	162	176	261
Total	15,526	15,882	19,397	18,664

With effect from 1 April 2003, distraction burglary became a sub-category of "burglary dwelling" under the Home Office counting rules, allowing data on this type of crime to be collated routinely. Crime figures for 2003–04 will be published in July.

Prosecution data are not available, as the law does not separately define distraction burglary.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures are in place to prevent distraction crimes; and if he will make a statement. [178418]

Ms Blears: Distraction burglary is a callous crime against mainly older members of society. We are determined to do as much as we can to prevent it.

We set up a Distraction Burglary Task Force in 2000 to gather data, publicise good practice and increase the awareness of the problem, particularly among vulnerable people. The Task Force includes representatives of the police, voluntary organisations, the utility companies, banks and local authorities.

Many measures are now in place to prevent distraction burglary including in a number of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships where this crime has been identified as of local concern. These measures include improving the appearance and security of homes, sharing intelligence between all the involved agencies and educating people in crime reduction measures. In addition, from February to April 2004, the Home Office ran a publicity campaign to raise awareness of distraction

burglary and to promote safe doorstep behaviour. Over 100,000 "How to Beat the Bogus Caller" leaflets were distributed, many regional and local newspapers published articles on local incidents and initiatives and over 30 local radio stations ran items about distraction burglary and how to combat it.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent discussions his Department has had with other Government Departments on combating crime resulting from cold calling. [178420]

Ms Blears: In May 2004 the Office of Fair Trading published a report on doorstep selling. This included a recommendation that the Department of Trade and Industry consult on the option of banning cold calling to offer property services.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, my hon. Friend the Member for Bradford, South (Mr. Sutcliffe), will respond to the report on behalf of the Government. I have discussed the importance of tackling doorstep crime with him. Officials from my Department and his, alongside representatives of other Departments and the devolved Administrations, are already taking forward work in response to the report. The response will be made within 90 days of the report's receipt.

EU Workers

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on his Department's review of quotas for workers in *(a)* agriculture, *(b)* hospitality and *(c)* food processing in the light of EU enlargement. [179332]

Mr. Browne: I refer the hon. Member to the statement I made to the House on this issue on 19 May 2004.

Excessive Drinking

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much police *(a)* time and *(b)* resources were spent on dealing with problems associated with excessive drinking in the latest year for which figures are available. [179646]

Ms Blears: No specific grant is made available to police forces to deal directly with the problems associated with excessive drinking. However, the total Government provision for policing to be supported by grant or spent centrally on services for the police amounts to £10.1 billion, an increase of £2.3 billion or 30 per cent. since 2000–01. It is for individual police forces to decide how they allocate their resources to tackle their crime and disorder priorities.

There is provision within the Building Safer Communities Fund (BSC) for Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships to tackle alcohol-related crime—just one of the many crime reduction uses to which BSC funding may be put. Total funding for England and Wales in 2003–04 was £72.3 million, and a further £74 million is being made available this year.

The Government attach a high priority to tackling alcohol-fuelled violence. On the 11 June 2004 we announced that the Home Office Police Standards Unit, working in partnership with the Association of Chief Police Officers, will be inviting forces and other partners from across the country to take part in a co-ordinated programme of enforcement and initiatives to tackle alcohol-fuelled violence. The campaign includes targeting the irresponsible few who encourage underage and binge drinking and targeting drunken behaviour. This takes forward one of the recommendations in the Government's Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy (AHRS) for England.

The Government's AHRS was published on 15 March 2004. The strategy proposes a series of measures to address the problems of those town and city centres that are blighted by alcohol misuse. The Government are working closely with a range of partners from the drinks industry to statutory authorities to help deliver the recommendations in the AHRS and tackle alcohol misuse.

G8 Summit 2005

Mr. Lyons: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the cost of policing the G8 summit in 2005 will be borne by *(a)* the Home Office and *(b)* the local police authority. [178135]

Ms Blears: I understand that the G8 Summit in 2005 will be held in Scotland. Police costs will be a matter for the Scottish Executive although I understand that the Treasury have agreed that extra funds will be made available by the UK Government to help meet the agreed additional policing costs.

Illegal Immigration (Lincolnshire)

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate his Department has made of the number of illegal immigrants in Lincolnshire. [179434]

Mr. Browne: Official estimates of the number of illegal immigrants in the United Kingdom do not exist. The Government have commissioned research into the methods used in other countries to estimate the size of their illegal populations in order to define methods appropriate for the UK.

The work required is challenging because, by definition, illegal migrants fall outside of official statistics and are therefore difficult to measure. People illegally present in the UK are also motivated to ensure they remain hidden, which is a challenge to conducting research.

Immigration Service

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on progress with the overhaul of the immigration service recently announced by the Prime Minister. [179500]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 18 June 2004]:* To support the "top to bottom" review of the immigration system called for by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary set up managed migration taskforces.

The taskforces work across the whole of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) and with other departments and stakeholders to identify and

address any areas of abuse of managed migration routes, drawing on intelligence, the experience of front line staff and management information from across the system. In this way, the Department is building on what worked to reduce abuse of the asylum system, in a comprehensive monitoring and reporting framework. This will allow resources to be properly directed to target potential abuse even before problems arise.

Based on the work to date, we have already announced a number of steps to tackle abuses of the marriage, students and employment routes. These include:

To date the student taskforce has visited 401 colleges about which we had suspicions and applications to those institutions clearly found to be bogus are now being refused. A registration scheme is being established for genuine colleges and will be operational by the turn of the year. Once this has been done, student visas will not be issued in respect of colleges not on the register. We are discussing with the education sector how best to implement arrangements for notifying us of overseas students who fail to turn up for, or drop out of, a course.

To tackle the increasing problem of sham marriages being used to circumvent immigration controls, the Government are bringing forward legislation to establish powers to restrict the authorisation of marriages involving foreign nationals from outside the EEA to designated register offices and to introduce a pre-marriage eligibility requirement for such cases. IND officials have already formed a cross governmental joint working group made up of officials from the Offices of the Registrars General for England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, the Department of Constitutional Affairs, the Church of England, LACORS, and registrars from across the UK. The Group is working on identifying strengths and weaknesses of current systems and will facilitate the introduction of the aforementioned designated centres.

Based on the analysis and recommendations of the employment and business taskforce, the Sectors Based Scheme quota has been cut for the year beginning 1 June 2004. The Scheme has been reduced from a total of 20,000 to 6,000 in food processing and 9,000 in hospitality. The Government have also announced that the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme quota will be reduced in 2005 by 35 per cent. These cuts reflect the proportion of the previous year's quotas taken up by workers from the accession countries, who are now entitled to come and work in the United Kingdom under the worker's registration scheme. The taskforce is currently consulting on introducing country-specific quotas which will be dependent on countries having satisfactory returns agreements with the UK.

Neighbourhood Watch

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the steps he is taking to provide funding to Neighbourhood Watch schemes. [177724]

Ms Blears: Neighbourhood Watch Schemes are local partnerships between communities, the Police, local authorities and others.

The Government supports these local schemes in various ways: supplying free publications, sponsoring national conferences in 2002 and 2003 and significant amounts of Police and local authority staff time.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the steps he is taking to provide funding to the National Neighbourhood Watch Association. [177725]

Ms Blears: The National Neighbourhood Watch Association is an independent organisation that has funded itself from commercial sponsorship since its foundation.

The Home Office nevertheless provided the National Neighbourhood Watch Association with exceptional grants totalling £350,000 during 2003. Following an audit of the National Neighbourhood Watch Association's finances, and taking account of Government accounting rules, the Home Secretary declined to grant further funds.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has held with the National Neighbourhood Watch Association regarding funding for Neighbourhood Watch. [177730]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 9 June 2004]:* The Home Office's discussions with the National Neighbourhood Watch Association have focused on the funding for that organisation rather than for the local schemes. We are not aware of any specific proposals from the National Neighbourhood Watch Association in relation to funding for individual Neighbourhood Watch Schemes.

However, the Government support Neighbourhood Watch schemes as a partnership between communities, the police and local authorities in various ways. This includes supplying free publications and training materials, sponsoring national conferences in 2002 and 2003, and significant amounts of Police and local authority staff time.

Overseas Doctors

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average time taken to process applications was for leave to remain for doctors from overseas on work permits wishing to work in the NHS in the most recent period for which figures are available. [179807]

Mr. Browne: The information requested is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average time taken to process an application was for permit-free postgraduate training status for overseas doctors in training wishing to work and train in the NHS in the most recent period for which figures are available. [179808]

Mr. Browne: Figures for the average time taken to process individual types of applications are not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to reduce the *(a)* cost to and *(b)* administrative burden on overseas

doctors in training of renewing their permit-free postgraduate training status to enable them to work in the NHS. [179809]

Mr. Browne: Overseas doctors here for postgraduate training do not require work permits but must meet the requirements of the Immigration Rules for leave to remain in this capacity. Charging for general leave to remain applications was introduced on 1 August 2003 and individual applicants must pay the requisite fee. The fee is £155 for a postal application and £250 for personal callers who wish to apply at one of the four Public Enquiry Offices.

Fees are set by Treasury rules to recover the full administrative cost entailed in considering applications and no more. We will be reviewing the fee annually and as such consideration will be given to improving the way the charging system is operated and the feasibility of differential charges. We have announced that there would be consultation before any more changes to the fee are made, and the consultation is planned for this autumn.

Since the introduction of charges on 1 August 2003, we have been completing 70 per cent. of postal applications within three weeks of receiving them in the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) and are continuing to do this. We may not be able to complete applications within three weeks of receipt if they need further documents, inquiries or an interview, or if they are complex. We should deal with these within 13 weeks at most. If applicants use the right form, pay the correct fee, provide all the required documents and photographs, and sign and date the form, it will help the chances of their application being completed quickly.

Passports

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will introduce free passports for British passport holders over 75 years. [179393]

Mr. Browne: The United Kingdom Passport Service is currently pursuing options to introduce the scheme, which will provide free passports for all British Nationals born on or before 2 September 1929. It is the United Kingdoms Passport Service's intention to introduce this scheme in the autumn 2004.

Sexual Offences

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Initial Crime Investigators Department Programme will include training of uniformed officers who deal with sexual offence investigation; and if he will make a statement. [171024]

Ms Blears: The Initial Crime Investigators Development Programme delivered by CENTREX is aimed at Trainee Investigators with the potential to become Detective Constables. It includes the investigation of sexual offences. The programme has been implemented nationally since January 2003 and is currently being delivered in 38 out of 43 forces, with the remainder moving towards full implementation.

The CENTREX National Centre for Policing Excellence is also working on national training development in this area. It is intended to design a national programme to develop "Specially Trained Officers". These officers are usually uniformed officers who provide victim care, while also ensuring optimum evidence retrieval. The aim is for this programme to be piloted from the end of 2004.

Somaliland/Somalia

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were returned to *(a)* Somaliland and *(b)* Somalia in each of the past five years; and if he will make a statement. [179512]

Mr. Browne: Although Somaliland declared its independence from the rest of Somalia in 1991, it is not recognised internationally and asylum applicants received from those originating from that part of Somalia are not recorded separately.

Information on the total number of people who are removed from the United Kingdom is not available by nationality except by examination of individual case-files at disproportionate cost.

Estimates of the number of Somali nationals who had sought asylum at some stage and were removed from the UK between 1999 and 2003 are shown in the table. These figures include persons departing "voluntarily' after the initiation of enforcement action against them, and persons leaving under Assisted Voluntary Returns Programmes run by the International Organisation for Migration.

Removals and voluntary departures[1,2] of asylum applicants, excluding dependants, nationals of Somalia, 1999 to 2003— United Kingdom

	Number of persons
1999	n/a
2000	n/a
2001	25
2002[3]	50
2003[3]	50

n/a—not available

[1] All data have been rounded to the nearest 5.

[2] Includes persons departing "voluntarily' after enforcement action had been initiated against them, persons leaving under Assisted Voluntary Return Programmes run by the International Organisation for Migration, and removals on safe third country grounds. Excludes dependants of asylum seekers.

[3] Provisional data.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether a memorandum of understanding, similar to that signed with the administration in Somaliland, has been signed with any authority in Somalia. [178091]

Mr. Browne: The UK has not signed a memorandum of understanding on the return of failed asylum seekers with any authority in Somalia.

Speeding Fines

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many speeding fines were issued in Greater London, broken down by borough, in *(a)* 2001 and *(b)* 2002; [179355]

(2) how many speeding fines were paid by motorists in Greater London, broken down by borough, in *(a)* 2001 and *(b)* 2002; and how many speeding offences were detected in Greater London, broken down by borough, in (i) 2001 and (ii) 2002. [179356]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 18 June 2004]*: Available information showing the total number of fixed penalties and written warnings issued and court proceedings for speeding offences within Greater London for 2001 and 2002 are given in the tables. It is not possible from the data collected centrally to identify each London borough.

Information on the number of fixed penalties paid or fines paid for speeding offences is not collected centrally.

Table A: Fines and fixed penalties data for speeding offences[1], Greater London[2], 2001 and 2002

Number of offences

	Court proceedings fines issued	*Fixed penalty notices issued*
2001	8,941	59,125
2002	8,090	58,116

[1] Offences under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and Motor Vehicles (Speed Limits on Motorways) Regulations 1973.
[2] The Metropolitan and City of London Police combined.

Table B: Speeding offences[1] detected by type of action, Greater London[2], 2001 and 2002

Number of offences

	2001	*2002*
Type of action		
Court proceedings total findings of guilt	9,049	8,202
Fixed penalty notices issued	59,125	58,116
Written warnings issued	23	14
Total	68,197	66,332

[1] Offences under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and Motor vehicles (Speed Limits on Motorways) Regulations 1973.
[2] The Metropolitan and City of London Police combined.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many employees in his Department have *(a)* signed a formal opt out from and *(b)* are exempt from the Working Time Directive; and how many employees in his Department have recorded hours, including any accruing on a flexitime basis, in excess of the maximum allowed under the Working Time Directive in the last month for which figures are available. [178376]

Fiona Mactaggart: Employees working in excess of 48 hours per week are required to sign an "Opt-Out" agreement. Departments and agencies are required to maintain a register of all staff who have signed such an agreement.

Name of Department	*Agreements signed. Number of "opt-out"*	*Number of employees who are exempt*	*Number of employees accruing in excess of maximum hours*
Home Office	71	—	—
IND	140	—	—
Prison Service	n/a	n/a	n/a
FSS	n/a	n/a	n/a
UKPS	304	—	—

With regard to the Prison Service and Forensic Science Service the information is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Televisions

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what work her Department is undertaking to ensure that industry increases the energy efficiency of *(a)* televisions and *(b)* television set-top boxes when in stand-by mode. [179172]

Mr. Morley: The Department's Market Transformation Programme, working closely with the DTI and in consultation with industry and other experts, has established a substantial evidence base on the energy consumption of appliances and equipment in use, including standby mode, and on the potential for improvement.

For TVs and set-top boxes, we have sought undertakings by manufacturers to reduce both "on" and "stand-by" power consumption. Following an EU industry commitment, we expect that the majority of new televisions sold in the UK will soon consume around 1 Watt of power in stand-by mode rather than the 3–8 Watts consumed by older models. Furthermore, our commitment to more sustainable procurement requires any Government Department which purchases televisions to specify a stand-by power requirement of no more that 1 Watt.

My Department has strongly supported the development of the EU voluntary Code of Conduct for set top boxes, which we estimate will already secure energy savings of about 3 Terawatt hours per annum by 2010. We are working via the EU and channels such as the IEA to further raise the profile of this policy issue. We are also working with the Energy Efficiency Partnership for Homes and the Energy Saving Trust to explore the scope to use the Efficiency Recommended logo to encourage consumers to choose boxes which use the least energy. And, with DTI, we have agreed on minimum and best practice standards as part of the Government's policy on the switch over to digital TV services.

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of energy consumption arising from the use of set top television boxes in the last year for which figures are available. [179192]

Mr. Morley: The Department's Market Transformation Programme has estimated that there were about 10 million set top television boxes in use in

the UK in 2003, which consumed about 1.3 Terawatt hours of electricity. The estimate for 2004 is that the number of boxes in use will rise to nearly 12.5 million, with electricity consumption approaching 1.5 Terawatt hours. (The estimates cover the separate boxes which are used to receive digital TV signals via cable, satellite and Freeview transmissions. They do not include the energy consumed by decoders which are built into televisions and recording equipment.)

Agricultural Workers

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many agricultural workers are on the Seasonal Agricultural Workers programme in Lincolnshire. [179435]

Alun Michael: In 2004 so far 607 work cards have been issued under the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme to scheme participants planning to work on farms in Lincolnshire.

Energy Policy (Modelling)

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how her Department models the external costs of energy-related activities in the UK. [R] [178320]

Mr. Morley: There are several types of external costs that are usually associated with energy activities, including impacts on noise, health, buildings, crops, ecosystems and global warming. The most important externalities of energy activity in the UK are attached to emissions to air, including emissions of CO2 and of local pollutants.

The DTI UK Energy Model is the most comprehensive source of forecasts of CO2 emissions from energy use. The UK National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (NAEI), which is funded by Defra and Devolved Administrations, annually compiles estimates of emissions to the atmosphere from UK sources such as cars, trucks, power stations and industrial plants. Estimates of emissions of pollutants to air are a fundamental input to the air quality modelling work that the Department carries out to assess ambient concentrations of important air pollutants and to estimate their health and other impacts.

Valuation of non-market impacts is a challenging but important element of appraisal, and should be attempted wherever feasible. However valuation techniques are constantly being refined and considerable uncertainty typically characterises monetary estimates of the marginal damage costs associated to emissions of various pollutants.

A Government Economic Service working paper 'Estimating the Social Cost of Carbon Emissions' suggested a range of illustrative estimate for the global damage cost of carbon emissions. These figures are currently being reviewed by an interdepartmental group on the social cost of carbon which is expected to report by the end of the year.

The Department of Health's Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants (COMEAP) advises on how to quantify the health impacts associated with changes in local pollutant emissions, including PM10, NOx, SO2 and ozone. Currently there is no UK agreed monetary value that can be used for the reduction in risk of deaths brought forward by air pollution due to a lack of empirical evidence in the field. However, Defra has recently published a study which attempts to generate a theoretical range of monetary values for health benefits and is considering the feasibility of recommending a range of values to monetise the health impacts associated with air pollution for use in policy appraisal.

The Government also follow with interest the work of ExternE, a major EU-funded research study on the external cost of energy.

Firearms

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what discussions she had with the Home Secretary about firearms prior to the issue of the recent consultation paper; [179195]

(2) what mechanism she uses to present her views on the rural affairs aspects of firearms law to the Home Secretary; [179196]

(3) what assessment she has made of the implications for the rural economy of the Home Office firearms consultation paper. [179197]

Alun Michael: The Government are committed to rural proofing all domestic policies to take account of rural circumstances and needs. Defra will be contributing to the process of consultation as it affects the Departments responsibilities through the normal processes of collective Government.

GM Crops

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when her Department plans to *(a)* commence and *(b)* report on the proposed consultation on co-existence and liability of GM crops. [179979]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 22 June 2004]:* We are currently preparing our consultation package on the issue of the co-existence of GM and non-GM crops in discussion with the authorities in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland and this will be issued as soon as possible. A consultation period of three months is envisaged, following which we will decide on the next steps. No GM crops currently have the necessary approvals for cultivation in the UK and we do not anticipate any move towards commercial cultivation of GM crops here before 2006 at the earliest.

Horse Exports

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether she intends to preserve the current effective ban on the live export of horses for overseas consumption. [179194]

Alun Michael: The Government are not in favour of the live export of horses for slaughter and have worked closely with animal welfare organisations on this issue and to strengthen the welfare requirements for horses in transit. While there is no ban on the export of horses and ponies for slaughter and never has been, we will retain and

continue to operate the current minimum values and licensing rules unless and until we succeed in obtaining EU-wide modern, welfare-based arrangements to protect horses and ponies.

Livestock Exports

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many live cattle were exported to EU member states in each of the past three years. [179405]

Mr. Bradshaw: There have been no exports of live cattle to EU member states in the past three years. The export of live cattle from the UK is banned under EU legislation.

Sustainable Farming

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what support is available to fund the South West Plan for Sustainable Farming and Food. [178202]

Alun Michael: The delivery plan for Sustainable Farming and Food (SFF) in the South West, "Making a difference", was launched on 26 May after extensive consultation. It has been drawn up by the stakeholders who will be responsible for implementing the actions detailed within it.

The delivery of the South West plan, as with all of the SFF regional delivery plans, will be facilitated by many public body and industry representatives and these organisations will work together with both resource and funding support to deliver the vision detailed in the plan. They are making use of Government grants, industry support and the resources of the Government Office and Regional Development Agency, as well as other Government bodies participating in the regional steering group. In particular, existing support programmes, including the England Rural Development Programme and the objective 1 agriculture programme in Cornwall, have been targeted to deliver the SFF plan; also the Regional Development Agency is making considerable resources available to support delivery of the plan. Given the number of public and industry bodies contributing to delivery of the plan, it is not possible precisely to quantify the level of support available to fund the plan.

Temporary Staff

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total amount paid by her Department to employment agencies for the supply of temporary staff was in financial year 2003–04. [178914]

Alun Michael: The total amount paid to employment agencies for the supply of temporary staff in Defra itself in financial year 2003–04 was £12.02 million. To supply the information for Defra agencies would involve disproportionate cost.

Village Shops

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) if she will make a statement on the withdrawal of the vital villages scheme and its potential impact of the continuation of voluntary shop initiatives in rural areas; [179295]

(2) what funding schemes are available for voluntary shops. [179296]

Alun Michael: The vital villages scheme was established in 2001 as a time-limited programme. The Countryside Agency has met its three-year target to help rural communities to help themselves and to demonstrate good practice through the vital villages scheme and the programme is now closed to new applicants.

During 2004–05 the Countryside Agency will continue to provide funding to rural voluntary shops from the vital villages programme where existing commitments exist.

Other possible sources of funding and support for voluntary shops include: funding from district councils; for those eligible, rate relief from local authorities; community bond and share schemes, through which some community shops have raised funds; and, for those with strong community backing, Defra's Rural Enterprise Scheme.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she last met representatives of the Village Retail Services Association; and if she will make a statement of what help is now forthcoming to that organisation. [179321]

Alun Michael: I last met representatives from the Village Retail Services Association (ViRSA) on 16 December 2003 and I have a further meeting arranged in early July 2004. The Government value the work of the association for its support to village shops and post offices.

The Countryside Agency has recently been approached for funding by ViRSA and progress has been made towards agreeing support to fund formal Small Firms Enterprise Development Initiative accreditation for several ViRSA fieldworkers, which will allow them to contract to Business Links to provide advice and support to rural retailers. Once accredited, fieldworkers could generate more income for ViRSA and in addition to the Countryside Agency is willing to fund a Business Counselling Training seminar for ViRSA fieldworkers associated with their accreditation.

ViRSA has also proposed that the agency fund a joint meeting and that the agency help with support costs of ViRSA in developing regional relationships and securing future funding—particularly with the rural development agencies with whom the remit for advice to rural retailers (via Business Links) will lie. The agency is awaiting a costed breakdown of what ViRSA's aims, objectives and projected outputs are for these areas of work.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Education Statistics (London)

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much was spent per pupil for *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary school education in (i) Brent East, (ii) the London borough of Brent and (iii) London in each year since 1997. [172804]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is submitted to the Department according to local education authority areas rather than districts within an area. Brent East is a district of Brent local education authority. The information for Brent LEA is as follows:

Net current expenditure (after recharges) per pupil

£

Brent LEA	Primary education	Pre-primary & Primary	Secondary education
1997–98	n/a	2,370	4,610
1998–99	n/a	2,650	5,060
1999–2000	2,630	2,710	3,320
2000–01	2,710	2,810	3,740
2001–02	3,050	3,160	4,090
2002–03	3,230	3,370	4,330

£

Greater London	Primary education	Pre-primary & Primary	Secondary education
1997–98	n/a	2,340	3,130
1998–99	n/a	2,520	3,250
1999–2000	2,630	2,750	3,280
2000–01	2,820	3,000	3,540
2001–02	3,160	3,380	4,020
2002–03	3,440	3,610	4,320

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from LEAs' Section 52 Outturn Statements submitted to the DfES from 1999–2000 onwards and the ODPM's RO1 statement previously. 2002–03 data is subject to change by the LEA. Expenditure was not distinguished between pre-primary and primary sectors until the inception of the Section 52 outturn statement in 1999–2000.

2. 1999–2000 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance. Brent LEA had 11 GM schools out of 13. The GM schools were not included in the 1998–99 data but were in 1999–00. If 1997–98 and 1998–99 figures are adjusted to include funding and pupils, the figures become 3,019 for 1997–98 and 3,171 for 1998–99.

3. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the unit costs per pupil in 2002–03 are not strictly comparable with earlier years as they include an apportionment of LEA expenditure based on pupil numbers. Figures are rounded to the nearest £10.

4. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEA.

5. The NCE per pupil figures for pre-primary & primary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in the pre-primary sector and maintained primary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained nursery and primary schools sector.

6. The NCE per pupil figures for secondary relate the net current expenditure (after recharges) in maintained secondary schools to the total number of financial year pupils who are educated in the maintained secondary schools sector.

7. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

Pupil Funding

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will estimate the annual cost of educating all pupils currently within the private education sector in the state sector. [176939]

Mr. Miliband: We have made no such estimate.

School Performance

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the correlation between value added measures of school performance and absolute measures of school performance, with particular reference to GCSE/GNVQ results. [179899]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 22 June 2004]:* For maintained mainstream schools published in the 2003 Secondary (GCSE/GNVQ) performance tables, the correlation between the school KS3-GCSE value added measure and the school average capped point score for 15-year-olds was 0.46.

School Places

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list, for each of the last five years, for each English local education authority, the total number and percentage of parents lodging an appeal against the allocation of a place for their child in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools. [176702]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 10 June 2004]:* The requested information has been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Due to changes in the underlying data collection, the percentage of appeals lodged given in this table for 2001–02 is not directly comparable with earlier years.

Information on admission appeals lodged in 2002–03 will be published in a Statistical First Release on 17 June.

Schools (Capital Investment)

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools in each of the successful bids for wave one of Building Schools for the Future were designated as *(a)* weak, *(b)* under-performing and *(c)* failing. [172908]

Mr. Miliband: The following table shows the data requested for areas included in wave one of Building Schools for the Future. The LEAs' projects were chosen on the basis of the educational and social need of the schools included, the quality of the authorities' educational plans, and the authorities' capacity to deliver a large procurement.

LEA	Number of schools in "serious weakness"	Number of schools with GCSE performance under 30 per cent.	Number of schools in Special Measures
Knowsley	0	3	0
Lancashire	0	2	0
Leeds	2	8	1
Leicester	0	2	0
Manchester	1	4	0
Newcastle upon Tyne	1	3	0
Newham	0	1	0

LEA	Number of schools in "serious weakness"	Number of schools with GCSE performance under 30 per cent.	Number of schools in Special Measures
Solihull	1	2	0
South Tyneside/Gateshead	0	2	0
Stoke-on-Trent	0	3	0
Sunderland	0	3	0
Waltham Forest	1	3	0

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Child Labour

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make grants to sports clubs and associations conditional on their use and purchase only of equipment which has not been manufactured using child labour. [179773]

Mr. Caborn: The Government are strongly committed to helping eliminate child labour throughout the world and fully support the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in this area. Although sports governing bodies do not have the resources to enable them to research how equipment funded by grants has been manufactured, the Government do urge all UK importing industries to be scrupulous in their choice of suppliers and ensure that they uphold the ILO core labour standards, including those on child labour. The UK has ratified all of the related ILO core Conventions and has provided £15 million to the ILO's International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour.

Diverse Media

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what her policy is on ensuring that all people in the UK have access to a diverse media. [179742]

Estelle Morris: The Government are committed to ensuring that all people in the United Kingdom have access to diverse media and brought forward the Communications Act 2003 to deliver that policy. For example, the Act requires the new communications regulator, Ofcom, to secure the availability throughout the United Kingdom of a wide range of electronic communications services and a wide range of television and radio services. Ofcom must also have regard to the desirability of encouraging the availability and use of high speed data transfer services throughout the United Kingdom. These responsibilities are supported by other provisions of the Act and by the Government's own policies for extending the availability of digital television services.

Iraq (Antiquities)

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what recent information she has received about important cultural artefacts taken from *(a)* the Museum of Baghdad and *(b)* elsewhere in Iraq being discovered (i) in the UK, (ii) in other European Union countries, (iii) in the US and (iv) on the international arts market; and if she will make a statement. [179338]

Tessa Jowell: Estimates made available to us suggest that, of the 40 important "iconic" objects stolen from the exhibition halls of the Iraq Museum, about half have now been recovered. Of the 15,000 objects taken from the storerooms about 7,000 have been recovered, which means that around 8,000 are still missing (including 5,000 cylinder seals). So far as I am aware none of the objects stolen from the museum has been recovered in the UK.

Further information was received by the Interpol Tracking Task Force for Iraq at its meeting on 30 and 31 May in Jordan with updates from Interpol the US, UK, France, Italy and Jordan.

France and Italy stated that no objects from the museum had been recovered in their country although both had seized some items of Iraqi origin, possibly from illegal excavations.

The US have recently seized three cylinder seals from the Iraq Museum (marked with IM numbers) and they have also seized several consignments of property suspected of being excavated from Iraq.

Jordanian and Syrian customs have been very active and made many significant seizures including cylinder seals and an Ivory chairback (on the "most wanted" list).

The conference recognised the use of the internet to sell suspicious property from Iraq and made recommendations that are published on the Interpol website.

The Metropolitan Police Art and Antiques Unit has recovered a number of Iraqi objects stolen between the wars and they are in the process of repatriating them.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she expects the Museum of Baghdad to reopen; and if she will make a statement. [179339]

Tessa Jowell: This is a matter for Iraq's interim Government and the Iraq State Board of Antiquities to decide.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Bail

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many defendants were granted bail in Northern Ireland in each year since 1999 where they were charged with *(a)* attempted murder, *(b)* armed robbery, *(c)* assault occasioning grievous bodily harm and *(d)* manslaughter. [169929]

Mr. Leslie: I have been asked to reply.

The information sought is not readily available, but is currently being collated, and will be provided as soon as possible.

HEALTH

Adverse Drug Reactions

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the future development of direct patient reporting of adverse drug reactions. [178659]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The yellow card scheme is the United Kingdom system for collecting and monitoring information on suspected adverse drug reactions (ADRs). The scheme is run by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) on behalf of the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM) and currently depends on voluntary reporting of suspected ADRs by health professionals. The purpose of the scheme is to provide an early warning that the safety of a product may require further investigation.

Following an independent review of access to the yellow card scheme, it was announced on 4 May 2004 that the recommendation that patients should be able to report suspected adverse drug reactions directly to the CSM/MHRA had been accepted in principle.

The MHRA is currently developing proposals to pilot different arrangements for patient reporting to gauge effectiveness. The Licensing Authority will reach a decision on the proposals, taking into account the advice of the CSM.

Insulin

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will instruct the National Institute for Clinical Excellence to investigate and compare the clinical effectiveness of beef, pork and synthetic insulins. [R] [179548]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We have no plans to refer this topic to the National Institute for Clinical Excellence.

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the number of insulin dependent diabetics prescribed *(a)* beef, *(b)* pork and *(c)* other insulins in each of the past 10 years for which figures are available. [R] [179549]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not hold this data.

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions he has had with insulin manufacturers about the continuity of future supply to patients. [R] [179551]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department is in regular contact with the companies who manufacture insulin. None of them currently has any plans to withdraw from the United Kingdom market.

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether his Department has responsibility for the continuity of supply for *(a)* all insulins, *(b)* specific insulins and *(c)* an insulin; and if he will make a statement. [R] [179552]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department is in regular contact with the companies which supply insulins to the United Kingdom market and makes every effort to ensure that patients continue to receive the treatment they require. However the Department has no powers to force a company to continue to market a product if, for any reason, it is unable to do so.

NHS Waste Disposal

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost to the NHS of waste disposal by *(a)* landfill and *(b)* incineration, in England was in each year since 1996, broken down by (i) NHS region and (ii) strategic health authority. [178247]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The table shows the cost to the national health service of waste disposal in each year since 1999–2000. This information was not collected prior to that date and is therefore shown by strategic health authority (SHA) area only. Information on the breakdown of this cost by disposal method is not collected centrally.

Total waste disposal costs by year

SHA	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*£ million 2002–03*
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	1.54	2.28	2.19	1.97
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	0.86	1.27	1.55	1.65
Birmingham and the Black Country	1.84	1.61	1.94	2.13
Cheshire and Merseyside	1.37	1.81	1.84	2.40
County Durham and Tees Valley	0.75	0.84	0.90	1.07
Cumbria and Lancashire	1.40	1.43	1.46	1.65
Dorset and Somerset	0.75	1.45	0.84	0.95
Essex	1.12	0.60	1.10	1.52
Greater Manchester	2.55	2.39	2.55	3.16
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	1.23	1.39	1.49	1.98
Kent and Medway	1.04	0.99	1.13	1.25
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	1.14	1.28	2.17	164
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	1.58	1.43	1.52	2.01
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	1.36	1.45	1.62	1.61
North Central London	1.90	1.83	1.92	2.73
North East London	1.63	1.69	2.09	2.37
North West London	2.52	2.53	3.40	2.44
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	1.27	1.21	1.54	1.73
Shropshire and Staffordshire	1.02	1.25	1.36	1.50
South East London	1.29	1.55	1.99	2.21
South West London	1.37	1.39	1.61	1.97

Total waste disposal costs by year

SHA	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*£ million 2002–03*
South West Peninsula	0.99	0.69	1.24	1.20
South Yorkshire	1.95	1.23	1.63	1.67
Surrey and Sussex	2.04	2.22	2.30	2.55
Thames Valley	1.90	1.57	1.75	2.00
Trent	1.72	2.02	1.76	2.15
West Midlands South	0.67	0.74	0.98	1.20
West Yorkshire	2.10	2.01	2.57	2.43
National total	40.91	42.14	48.43	53.14

NICE Guidance

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of whether all strategic health authorities have robust processes in place to ensure that National Institute for Clinical Excellence guidance is *(a)* planned for and *(b)* followed through; and if he will make a statement. [179453]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A number of recent studies, including that undertaken by the national cancer director, have showed some variations in the effectiveness of local planning and implementation mechanisms for National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidance. We have recently announced a programme of action to help the national health service respond positively to NICE guidance, including action by strategic health authorities.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Anti-social Behaviour Orders

John Mann: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs in how many anti-social behaviour order cases magistrates' clerks have advised that hearsay evidence is inadmissible. [180107]

Mr. Leslie: The information requested is not collected and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

John Mann: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment he has made of the speed of anti-social behaviour order convictions in *(a)* West Lancashire, *(b)* Nottinghamshire and *(c)* England. [180108]

Mr. Leslie: I am not aware of delays in dealing with breaches of ASBOs in the geographical areas mentioned or within England and Wales. Detailed information is not collected by my Department and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Election Turnout

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the turnout was as a percentage of eligible voters at the European parliamentary elections *(a)* this year and *(b)* in 1999, broken down by region. [179695]

Mr. Leslie: I refer the hon. Member to the written statement made in the House on 21 June 2004, column 72Ws, comparing the turnout for the European parliamentary elections for 1999 and for this year. The following table states the turnout, region by region, for the respective years.

Percentage

Region	*1999*	*2004*
East Midlands	22.6	44.6
North East	19.6	41.5
North West	19.4	41.5
Yorkshire and Number	19.6	42.9
East of England	24.5	36.6
London	23.0	37.7
South East	24.7	36.5
South West	27.6	37.8
West Midlands	21.0	36.6
Scotland	24.7	30.9
Northern Ireland	57.8	51.7
Wales	29.0	41.9

Postal Voting

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will make a statement on postal voting in the north-west. [179289]

Mr. Leslie: A written statement on the subject of the postal voting pilots which recently took place in four regions, including the north-west, was given to the House on 21 June.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Afghanistan

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what proportion of the population of Pashtun in Afghanistan have access to safe drinking water. [176593]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: It is estimated that less than 24 per cent. of the population in Afghanistan has access to safe drinking water; however, currently there is no further detailed information available with respect to coverage and conditions. However, there are reports of many water drinking projects carried out by International aid organisations in Afghanistan, which are also compiling information on water supply. The Afghan Government have also started a priority project focusing on water and sanitation. This project, with a budget of US$295 million over five years, includes provision of 130,000 water points/hand pumps to 3.25 million families, and 310 different water schemes throughout the country.

Cycle Parking

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what provision is made at his Department headquarters for cycle parking for visitors; and how accessible it is. [179878]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID's London headquarters at 1 Palace street does not have cycle parking facilities specifically for visitors, as the building has no external space available for parking of any type. However, there are 64 secure internal cycle spaces for staff, which can be used by visitors upon request.

DFID's East Kilbride office has 20 cycle spaces, all of which are freely available for staff or visitor use.

Departmental Secondments

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many staff in his Department and its agencies were seconded from the *(a)* private and *(b)* academic sectors in each of the last three years. [175360]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The following statistics relate to secondments from *(a)* private sector and *(b)* academic sector to the DFID, commencing in each financial year from 2001–02:

Financial year (April-March)	*Private*	*Academic*
2001–02	0	0
2002–03	0	0
2003–04	1	0

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Guantanamo Bay

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Solicitor-General on what dates officials of the Law Officers have visited British nationals detained at Guantanamo Bay; on what dates the Attorney-General received reports on the welfare of detainees; what representations he has made on behalf of the prisoners; and what action he took to make his concerns known to relatives or legal representatives of those detained. [177589]

The Solicitor-General: No officials from the Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers have visited the British nationals detained in Guantanamo Bay. I refer my hon. Friend to the reply given by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 8 June 2004, my hon. Friend the Member for Sunderland, South (Mr. Mullin), *Official Report*, column 303W, in reply to his question no. 177590.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Asbestos

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his answer of 12 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1795W, on asbestos, what proportion of the asbestos identified in buildings occupied by his Department's staff was the *(a)* chrysotile and *(b)* amphibole form of asbestos. [176787]

Jane Kennedy: Although information is available in respect of all the Departments buildings in which asbestos has been identified, a global breakdown of the types of asbestos is not yet maintained centrally. It is anticipated that this information can be provided once the current piece of work to populate a database is fully complete, in late summer. Nonetheless, the Department and its predecessors have done everything possible to prevent any exposure to asbestos and have been proactive in identifying buildings containing the substance and either sealing or removing the asbestos, as necessary.

Attitude Surveys

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what surveys of public perceptions of *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its areas of responsibility have taken place over the last 12 months; what the (i) title and (ii) nature of these surveys was; what the findings of each survey were; where these findings have been published; what the cost of all such surveys was; and if he will make a statement and place copies of the surveys in the Library. [174340]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 18 May 2004]:* The following surveys of public perceptions have been undertaken by the Department in the last 12 months.

Pension Service Customer Survey 2003

Findings from this survey were published in February 2004 (DWP Research Report number 205). A copy of the report has been placed in the Library and is also available on the Department's website at www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2003–2004/rrep205.asp

The cost of the survey was £496,285

Jobcentre Plus Service Delivery Survey

This was quantitative survey of Jobcentre Plus customers who experienced the 'front end' process in integrated offices, collecting views of First Contact, the Financial Assessor meeting, the initial mandatory Work Focused Interview and the office environment.

Findings are being analysed and are due to be published in autumn 2004.

The cost of this survey was £404,330

Public Awareness of Changes to State Pension Age for Women

A number of questions on this subject were included in the Office for National Statistics Omnibus Survey in November 2003 and February 2004.

Findings are being analysed and are due to be published in summer 2004.

The cost was £21,750.

Jobcentre Plus National Customer Satisfaction Survey 2003

Findings were published in September 2003 (DWP Research Report number W168). A copy of the report has been placed in the House Library and is also available on the Department's website at www.dwp.gov.uk/jad/2003/168rep.pdf

The cost of this survey was £88,660.

Public Perceptions of Child Support and the Child Support Agency

A module of questions on this topic were included in the Office for National Statistics Omnibus Survey in March 2004. Results are being analysed and are due to be published in autumn 2004.

The cost was £27,100

Service First Survey

This was a telephone survey carried out by the Appeals Service to test performance against a number of the service first standards which cannot be measured internally. Findings will be included in the Appeals Service Annual Report which is due to be published on 14 July. A copy of the report will be placed in the House library on that day.

The cost of the survey was £15,170.

Disability and Carers Service (DCS) Customer Service Survey 2003–04

A postal correspondence survey was issued during February and March 2004 to approximately 13,000 DCS customers who have claimed or are in receipt of one of the benefits the DCS administers—disability living allowance, attendance allowance and carer's allowance. 6,390 completed questionnaires were returned.

Analysis of the findings and publication of the full report is currently ongoing and will be made available later in the year.

The cost of the survey was £56,980.

Omnibus Survey and Awareness Research

The Department for Work and Pensions conducts annual omnibus surveys to monitor public awareness of the Department and its responsibilities, and also public attitudes to the Government's welfare reform. The Omnibus Survey was conducted in January 2004 and Awareness Research took place in October 2003. The emerging long-term trend shows a significant improvement in how the Department is regarded among people who experience the system as customers. Consideration is now being given to how we use this information to best effect in Departmental communications. The reports are not currently published.

The cost for both pieces of work is in the region of £25,000.

DWP Customers' Perception of the quality of service they have received in respect of their Medical Examination

These are monthly surveys. Over the 12-month period from April 2003 to March 2004, overall satisfaction scores ranged from 93 per cent. to 97per cent. Detailed survey findings are reported each month to the DWP's Medical Provision Contract Management Team, together with a Highlight Report. These are not published outside DWP.

The Department pays £7,200 per annum towards the survey costs.

Employer Performance Measure Survey

These are on-going surveys undertaken on a monthly basis. Interviews are conducted with employers that have notified and closed a vacancy with Jobcentre Plus in the previous three months in order to gather views on the service provided for the placing of that particular vacancy. Reports, for internal use, are produced on a quarterly basis.

The cost of these surveys in 2003–04 was £812,000

Income Thresholds

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the income thresholds used in paragraph 7 of the reply by the Government to the Second Report of the Work and Pensions Select Committee, Session 2003–04, Cm 6200 are *(a)* before housing costs (i) for the relative low income and (ii) for the absolute low income and *(b)* after housing costs (i) for the relative low income and (ii) for the absolute low income. [179516]

Mr. Pond: The figures in paragraph 7 of the reply by the Government to the Second Report of the Work and Pensions Select Committee refer to two different income thresholds. The absolute low income threshold used is 60 per cent. of the 1996–97 median equivalised household income. The relative low income threshold is 60 per cent. of contemporary median equivalised household income. The figures refer to changes between 1996–97 and 2002–03; the latest year for which figures are available.

Information relating to absolute and relative low income was derived from "Households Below Average Income—An analysis of the income distribution for 1994–95 to 2002–03". It is available in the Library.

New Deal (Benefit Sanctions)

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people on the *(a)* new Deal for Young People and *(b)* the New Deal for 25 Plus have had their jobseeker's allowance reduced in each year for *(a)* two weeks, *(b)* four weeks and *(c)* 26 weeks. [177550]

Jane Kennedy: Information on the duration of benefit sanctions imposed on people participating in New Deal for Young People and New Deal 25 plus is not available.

The Social Security Advisory Committee identified in late 2003 that work needed to be undertaken to review and evaluate the Sanctions Regime and DWP is nearing completion on a new Sanctions Database which will be

operational following testing and evaluation. This will provide detailed sanction MI on a regular basis and information will be published in the Library.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people on the *(a)* new Deal for Young People and *(b)* the New Deal for 25 Plus have had sanctions on their jobseeker's allowance in each year since 1998–99. [177551]

Jane Kennedy: Information about the number of sanctions applied to participants in New Deal 25 plus is not available. The Social Security Advisory Committee identified in late 2003 that work needed to be undertaken to review and evaluate the Sanctions Regime and DWP is nearing completion on a new Sanctions Database which will be operational following testing and evaluation. This will provide detailed sanction MI on a regular basis and information will be published in the Library.

Information on the number of sanctions applied to participants in New Deal for Young People is in the following table.

Number of sanctions applied to participants in New Deal for Young People

	Number of sanctions imposed[1]
1998–99	8,030
1999–2000	18,764
2000–01	17,507
2001–02	12,972
2002–03	13,416
2003–04	12,816

[1] Some people may have been sanctioned more than once during a year.

Source:
Labour Market Statistics-Analysis of Sector Decisions.

Full information on sanction decisions relating to jobseeker's allowance and New Deal for Young People can be found in the report "Labour Market Statistics—Analysis of Sector Decisions". Copies of quarterly and annual reports are available in the Library.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people participated in each New Deal scheme; and how many of these received a benefit sanction each year, broken down by *(a)* New Deal programme and *(b)* type of sanction. [177555]

Jane Kennedy: Information on the number of people who have participated in each New Deal scheme is in the following table.

	Number of New Deal Participants[1]
New Deal for Young People[2]	831,350
New Deal 25 plus[3]	496,790
New Deal for Lone Parents[4]	459,070
New Deal for Disabled People[5]	69,460
New Deal for Partners[6]	7,480
New Deal 50 plus[7]	98,040

[1] All figures relate to individuals who have started each programme.
[2] January 1998 to December 2003.
[3] April 1998 to December 2003.
[4] October 1998 to December 2003.
[5] Pilots launched in September 1998. National network of NDDP job brokers launched from July 2001. Up to December 2003.
[6] Launched as New Deal for Partners of Unemployed People in April 1999. Extended to partners of other benefit recipients in April 2001. Up to December 2003.
[7] New Deal 50 plus was introduced in nine pathfinder areas on 25 October 1999 and rolled out nationally on 3 April 2000. Up to March 2003.

Source:
New Deal Evaluation Database, Information and Analysis Directorate, DWP.

Within the New Deal programme, benefit sanctions are only applied within the New Deal for Young People and New Deal 25 plus. Information is not available for sanctions applied to participants in New Deal 25 plus.

The Social Security Advisory Committee identified in late 2003 that work needed to be undertaken to review and evaluate the Sanctions Regime and DWP is nearing completion on a new Sanctions Database which will be operational following testing and evaluation. This will provide detailed sanction MI on a regular basis and information will be published in the Library.

Information on the numbers of sanctions applied to New Deal for Young People participants broken down by reason for sanction, up to March 1999, is published in the "Analysis of Adjudication Officers' Decisions". Information from April 1999 onwards is published in "Analysis of Sector Decision Making". Copies of quarterly and annual reports are available in the Library.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what progress officials in his Department have made in providing more detailed and robust information on the sanction regime of the New Deal for Young People in the last year; if he will place the results of that progress in the Library; and if he will make a statement. [177556]

Jane Kennedy: More detailed and robust information on the sanction regime of the New Deal for Young People will be available as part of a new Sanctions Evaluation Database.

The Social Security Advisory Committee identified in late 2003 that work needed to be undertaken to review and evaluate the Sanctions Regime and DWP is nearing completion on the new Sanctions Database which will be operational following testing and evaluation. This will provide detailed sanction MI on a regular basis and information will be published in the Library.

It is anticipated that the new Sanctions Database will be operational in summer 2004.

Special Advisers

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many complaints have been made by civil servants to his Department's Permanent Secretary regarding the conduct of *(a)* special advisers and *(b)* unpaid advisers in each year since 1996–97. [174652]

Mr. Pond: The Department for Work and Pensions was created in June 2001. Information prior to June 2001 refers to predecessor Departments. So far as can be established without incurring disproportionate cost, there has been one complaint by a civil servant about a special adviser since 1996–97.

The Department has no unpaid advisers.

Sure Start

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many applications have been *(a)* received and *(b)* approved for Sure Start maternity grant (i) in total and (ii) at the Twickenham Job Centre Plus office; and what estimate he has made of the numbers who are entitled to this benefit. [176772]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested. The available information is in the tables.

Sure Start maternity grants for Thames Valley social fund district 2000–01

	Number
Applications	2,351
Awards	1,934

Sure Start maternity grants for area covered by Hounslow and Twickenham social fund district

	Applications	Awards
2001–02	1,170	934
2002–03	1,412	1,092
2003–04 (To November)	893	664

Sure Start maternity grants for area covered by the South London Jobcentre Plus district

	Applications	Awards
2003–04 (From December)	1,557	1,205
2004–05 (April only)	354	264

Sure Start Maternity Grants for Great Britain

	Applications	Awards
1999–2000	223	33
2000–01	200,941	170,293
2001–02	242,406	201,376
2002–03	289,132	232,414
2003–04	316,814	237,776
2004–05 (April only)	24,633	17,834

Notes:

1. In March 2000 Twickenham office was part of Thames Valley social fund district. In April 2001 it was moved to the newly created Hounslow and Twickenham social fund district. In December 2003 it was moved again, to become part of South London Jobcentre Plus district.
2. Sure Start maternity grants were introduced on 27 March 2000. The very small number of Thames Valley cases for 1999–2000 have been excluded for data protection reasons.
3. We have made no estimate of the number of people eligible for the Sure Start maternity grant.
4. Information regarding the number of people eligible for the Sure Start maternity grant is not available and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Source:

DWP Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System.

Work-focused Interviews

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have been penalised with reduced benefit for failing to attend a compulsory work-focused interview in each year for which figures are available, broken down by benefit received in each case. [177529]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is not currently available. The Social Security Advisory Committee identified in late 2003 that work needed to be undertaken to review and evaluate the Sanctions Regime and the DWP is nearing completion on a new Sanctions Database which will be operational following testing and evaluation. This will provide detailed sanction MI on a regular basis and information will be published in the Library.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many lone parents have been invited to attend a work-focused interview in each year since the start of the programme; how many have attended; how many have not attended; and how many have received a benefits penalty for failure to attend. [177967]

Jane Kennedy: Work-focused interviews for lone parents can be deferred or waived, or the customer may leave benefit between an interview being booked and the time it should be attended and benefit sanctions would not apply in these circumstances. Therefore not all interviews booked will result in a work-focused interview being attended.

The available information is in the table.

Lone parent work-focused interviews—new/repeat and existing customers

Calendar year	Booked total	Attended total
2001	106,130	85,360
2002	241,240	203,810
2003	399,300	355,860
2004	9,310	8,550

Source:

Jobcentre Plus Database (to February 2004) NDLP evaluation database (data to December 2003)

Information on benefits sanctions is not available. The Social Security Advisory Committee identified in late 2003 that work needed to be undertaken to review and evaluate the Sanctions Regime and DWP is nearing completion on a new Sanctions Database which will be operational following testing and evaluation. This will provide detailed sanction MI on a regular basis and information will be published in the Library.

Workstep Programme

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many disabled people who have participated in the Workstep programme in Greater London gained employment in each year since 1999; [177061]

(2) how much was spent by his Department on the Workstep programme in Greater London in each year since 1999. [177062]

Maria Eagle: Workstep was introduced in April 2001 to replace the former Supported Employment programme. Workstep provides support in jobs for disabled people who have more complex barriers to finding and keeping work but who, with the right support, can work effectively and develop in their job. Where it is appropriate, supported employees may also progress to unsupported employment.

The information on participants is not available in the format requested. Nationally, 1,800 people progressed into unsupported work in 2001–02; 2,144 in 2002–03 and 1,856 in 2003–04. Figures are currently not available below national level.

The Government allocated an additional £37.2 million over three years 2001–04 to expand the programme and to support providers to modernise and develop their delivery. From this sum a Workstep Modernisation Fund of £9.6 million was established in order to enable former Supported Employment Programme Providers to adapt quickly to the changes in the programme. Workstep providers in the London Region successfully submitted bids for modernisation funding totalling approximately £0.5 million.

The available information on spending is in the following table.

Workstep spend in the London region

	Amount (£)
2001–02	2,603,839
2002–03	2,685,024
2003–04	2,439,053

Note:
The figures quoted do not include the National Providers; Remploy, Shaw Trust, Scope and Employment Opportunities.

DEFENCE

Correspondence

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will reply to the letter dated 15 April from the hon. Member for Banff and Buchan regarding defence establishments and wind farm developments. [179553]

Mr. Caplin: A reply to this letter, which was not received in the Ministry of Defence until 5 May, was sent to the hon. Member on 18 June.

D-Day Commemorations

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the cost of the 60th anniversary D-Day events and commemorations. [179179]

Mr. Caplin: Detailed estimates covering all Ministry of Defence elements of expenditure are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

For some there will have been training or other defence benefit from their participation and so costs will not have been separately identified. However, I can advise that the additional costs arising from support provided by 102 Logistics Brigade was estimated at £190,000.

General Service Medal (Canal Zone Clasp)

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his latest estimate is of the total number of people entitled to the Canal Zone clasp to the General Service Medal; how many have been dispatched to date; what the backlog awaiting dispatch is; and if he will make a statement. [179714]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 22 June 2004]:* As at 18 June 2004 a total of 9,709 medals and/or clasps had been issued. The four medal offices had received 39,666 applications. The medal offices are dealing with cases received on the following dates:

Royal Naval Medal Office—27 November 2003.

Royal Marines Medal Office—As applications arrive.

Army Medal Office—10 October 2003.

Royal Air Force Medal Office—18 November 2003.

Iraq

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his latest estimate is of the number of civilians killed in Iraq by Coalition forces since 20 March 2003; and if he will make a statement on how this figure was calculated. [175074]

Mr. Ingram: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave on 14 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 641–42W, to the right hon. and learned Member for Rushcliffe (Mr. Clarke).

Mr. Dawson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many members of UK armed forces have been killed during the Second Gulf War. [179278]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 17 June 2004]:* 59 members of the armed forces have been killed in Operation Telic. 34 were killed during major combat operations from 19 March to 1 May, and 25 subsequently.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the countries of origin were of *(a)* advice, *(b)* technology and *(c)* materials discovered by the Iraq Survey Group which contributed towards the manufacture of weapons of mass destruction in that country. [179760]

Mr. Hoon: The Iraq Survey Group continues to investigate foreign assistance to Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction programmes and is expected to produce a substantive report later this year.

The Iraq Survey Group has confirmed that Iraq was holding discussions with North Korea regarding technology associated with a 1,300 km range missile system. It has also been confirmed that foreign technology and technical assistance were critical to the progress made by Iraqi engineers and designers.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his latest estimate is of the number of civilian casualties in Iraq since the beginning of the war. [175035]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 21 May 2004]:* I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 14 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 641–42W, to the right hon. and learned Member for Rushcliffe (Mr. Clarke).

MOD Sites

Mr. Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the timetable is for the replacement of worn-out buildings at the Defence Nuclear Biological and Chemical Centre at Winterbourne Gunner. [179482]

Mr. Caplin: Site preparation has begun for the replacement of some accommodation and mess blocks dating back to the First World War. Construction is expected to begin in August and complete by December 2005.

Nuclear Weapons

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for what reasons the UK has not decommissioned its nuclear weapons. [179775]

Mr. Hoon: I refer my hon. Friend to paragraph 3.11 of the 2003 Defence White Paper (Cm 6041–1).

RAF Innsworth

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* civilians and *(b)* military staff with experience of medal issuing were involved in the decision to centralise medal issuing at RAF Innsworth. [178998]

Mr. Caplin: The decision to form the new Ministry of Defence Medal Office was agreed by all major stakeholders including the senior single Service Principal Personnel Officers currently responsible for medals administration.

The decision to locate at RAF Innsworth was taken by the Chief Executive of the Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency, endorsed by Ministers, and was influenced by a range of factors such as business benefits, risks and cost and included consultation of medals staff via their trade unions.

PRIME MINISTER

Private Finance Initiative

David Taylor: To ask the Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Private Finance Initiative in saving public money. [179855]

The Prime Minister: The Government use the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) where it delivers value for money for the taxpayer. It is an important part of our overall strategy to provide investment to deliver world-class public services.

Terrorism

Harry Cohen: To ask the Prime Minister when the Government first received reports of the activities of *(a)* Osama Bin Laden and *(b)* Al-Qaeda; what the nature of the reports was in each case; and if he will make a statement. [179891]

The Prime Minister: The Government have been aware of the activities of Osama Bin Laden and Islamic terrorist networks including Al-Qaeda since the mid-1990s. In relation to the nature of the reports, it has been the practice of successive Governments not to comment on intelligence matters.

We and our international partners remain resolute in our determination to defeat terrorism and bring Osama Bin Laden and other Al-Qaeda leaders to justice.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Antarctica

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the Government are taking to promote conservation of the flora, fauna and mineral resources of Antarctica. [179582]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The protection of the Antarctic environment is provided through the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty, adopted in 1991. This includes a prohibition on all activity relating to mineral resources, other than scientific research, and establishes a permitting regime for any activities that may involve taking or harmful interference with the native fauna and flora of Antarctica. 31 states, including the United Kingdom, are parties to the Protocol.

The United Kingdom implements the provisions of this Protocol through the Antarctic Act 1994 and the related Antarctic Regulations 1995, as amended.

Chile

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the work done by the National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture in Chile; and if he will make a statement. [179634]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Government welcome any efforts to address abuses of human rights. The National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture in Chile is an important step forward in addressing past human rights abuses and fulfils one of the requirements of State parties to the United Nations Convention Against Torture.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the number of people not able to participate in the work of the National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture in Chile owing to insufficient advertisement; and if he will make a statement. [179635]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The number of people responding to the Commission has been lower than expected. It is not possible to establish precise reasons for this, although one contributory factor could be people's reluctance to re-live past traumatic experiences. The work of the Commission has been widely reported in the Chilean media. We have not been able to assess the extent to which lack of awareness of the Commission's existence is a significant factor in the lower than expected response.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assistance his Department *(a)* offered and *(b)* has given to the Government in Chile to facilitate the work of the National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture; and if he will make a statement. [179638]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has not worked with the Chilean Government on this specific issue, nor have we received any request for help. However, the Government have supported various human rights projects in related fields.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many *(a)* UK and *(b)* Chilean nationals now residing in the UK contacted his Department about (i) information on and (ii) assisting the work of the National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture in Chile; and if he will make a statement. [179639]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: I am told that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has no record of having been contacted by UK or Chilean nationals regarding the Commission.

China

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the EU arms embargo in relation to China. [179644]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The European Council on 12 December 2003 invited the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) to re-examine the EU arms embargo on China. The GAERC met on 26 January 2004 and decided to remit the issue to the relevant working groups for detailed examination. The issue will revert to a future GAERC.

The Government welcome the Review and Ministers are currently considering the UK's position. In the meantime we will continue fully to implement the arms embargo.

Cyprus

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has to visit Cyprus. [179906]

Mr. MacShane: Foreign engagements for my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and other Foreign and Commonwealth Office Ministers are kept under constant review. It is not our practice to announce such visits until they are firm. Because of the unpredictable nature of world events, final decisions on overseas visits are often not possible until very shortly before the day of travel.

Gibraltar

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what talks have taken place with EU officials on *(a)* cruise ships and *(b)* Gibraltar; when; where; and with whom. [180091]

Mr. MacShane: We continue to seek a permanent solution to the cruise ship issue. Although there have been no incidents over the last month, we regard Spanish interference with cruise-liner traffic en route from Gibraltar to Spain as unacceptable and illegal. To this end our Permanent Representation to the European Union has asked the Commission to investigate. We understand that the Commission has since taken this issue up with Spain.

In addition, officials from the UK Permanent Representation in Brussels have been in close and frequent contact with officials from EU Competition Director General in recent weeks, regarding the compatibility of Gibraltar's proposed corporate tax reforms with EC rules on State Aid. The Government of Gibraltar has played a full part in these discussions.

Iraq

Mr. Lyons: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many British citizens have been killed and injured in Iraq since the end of the war. [178138]

Mr. MacShane: 26 military personnel and 16 British civilians have been killed in Iraq since 1 May 2003 when major combat operations ceased. Consular staff have also provided assistance to a large number of British civilians who have been injured. This has included visiting individuals in local hospitals, assisting with medical transfers inside Iraq and arranging medical repatriations outside of Iraq. Given the varied nature of these cases, it has not been possible to collate the total number of injured that we have assisted. To obtain this information would incur disproportionate costs.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 7 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 63W, on Iraq, if he will place in the Library the minutes of the liaison meeting between the representative of the office of the UK Special Representative for Iraq with the US authorities in Baghdad; if he will list the representations which have been made to the coalition powers on the incident; what arrangements he understands have been put in place for the investigation ordered by the US Commander of the Multinational Force in Iraq; whether it will meet and hear evidence at any stage in public; to what timescale he understands it will operate; who will undertake the investigation, and who they represent; whether the UK offered arrangements or individuals to help undertake the investigation; and if he will make a statement. [179410]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The nature of any previous discussions the UK has had with the US Government on this matter are confidential, I am therefore withholding these details under Exemption 1 *(c)* of Part 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

The arrangements for the conduct of the investigation are for the US Government. The investigation is still under way but we have no indications when it will be completed. The United Kingdom is not involved in the investigation itself.

Iraqi Kurds

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the UK Government have received a copy of the letter sent to President Bush at the beginning of June by Kurdish leaders Massoud Barzani and Jalal Talabani concerning the future autonomy of Iraqi Kurds; and if he will make a statement. [179409]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: There was a private letter from Massoud Barzani and Jalal Talabani to President Bush, which was, we understand, subsequently leaked.

The long-term governing arrangements for Iraq, including those concerning any federal structure for Iraq, are a matter for the Iraqi constitution, which will

be drawn up by the Transitional National Assembly in 2005. UNSCR 1546 welcomes the commitment of the Interim Government of Iraq to work towards a federal, democratic, pluralistic and unified Iraq, in which there is full respect for political and human rights.

Western Sahara/Morocco

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the recent deaths of two Saharawis in Moroccan custody in Laayoune and Guelmim. [179323]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Moroccan authorities are looking into both of these cases. In the Guelmim case, police officers have been arrested and are likely to face charges. In the Laayoune case, the Moroccan Ministry of Justice is considering its next steps following a post mortem examination and representations from the family of the deceased. Moroccan NGOs have also responded and are following the cases, working constructively with the authorities and the families. My officials will continue to follow developments.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the recent Amnesty International Report on human rights abuses in Western Sahara and Morocco. [179324]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Ministers and officials raise human rights concerns with the Moroccan authorities as appropriate. We raised, for example, both bilaterally and in co-ordination with EU partners, the case of Ali Lmrabet with the relevant authorities.

We welcome Amnesty's positive view of the advances in human rights in Morocco during the period of the report, especially with regard to women's rights under the new Personal Status Code and the establishment of a Justice and Reconciliation Commission.

With regard to the Western Sahara dispute, we have encouraged all parties to co-operate on those missing in the conflict and have urged the Polisario to release the 514 remaining prisoners of war in their custody without delay.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make urgent representations to the Government of Spain on its new peace treaty plan, Madrid II, to try to settle the Western Sahara issue, with specific reference to the concerns expressed by *(a)* the Polisario Front and *(b)* the Saharawis people. [179325]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We have regular discussions with the Spanish Government on the question of Western Sahara. These have focussed on ensuring that the UN process leads to a fair and lasting solution to this dispute. There are no plans to make representations.

Zionist Terrorists (1940s/50s)

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether all Government papers in relation to the killing of UK individuals by Zionist terrorists in the 1940s and 1950s are now in the public domain; and if he will make a statement. [179794]

Mr. Straw: Government papers on the killing of UK individuals by Zionist terrorists in the 1940s and 1950s will be dispersed among the files originating in a number of Government Departments now in The National Archives (TNA). The TNA catalogue will show any that have been withheld.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does not have a central list of its withheld records. In the time available my Department has not identified any withheld papers dealing with this subject. A search is continuing to confirm the position and I will write to my hon. Friend when this is done.

The FCO is re-reviewing all of its withheld records on a systematic basis. Over 20,000 previously withheld records have been released since 1992. We also re-review on request any specific items identified by researchers working in TNA. In the last year we have re-reviewed and released a block of material including some on Zionist organisations in response to such a request; these are now available at TNA in class CO 733. Quarterly lists of FCO previously withheld releases are published on the FCO website (www.fco.gov.uk).

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Employment Tribunals (Reinstatement Orders)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will introduce legislation to ensure that employment tribunals have the power *(a)* to enforce Reinstatement Orders and *(b)* to force companies who do not comply with Reinstatement Orders to pay compensation in default. [179727]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The employment tribunals can order the reinstatement of an employee who has been unfairly dismissed, provided the employee seeks such a remedy and the tribunal considers that it would be just and practicable to order it. Employers who unreasonably fail to comply with a Reinstatement Order are required to pay a significant additional award on top of the usual award for unfair dismissal.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many Reinstatement Orders were issued by employment tribunals in each year since 1997; and how many have been carried out. [179728]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Since 1997 the number of Reinstatement Orders issued by the employment tribunals is as follows:

Year[1]	*Number*
1997–98	26
1998–99	16
1999–2000	10
2000–01	7
2001–02	6
2002–03	6
2003–04	8

[1] The year is the financial year beginning 1 April and ending on 31 March.

The Employment Tribunals Service does not collect data on how many Reinstatement Orders are carried out.

Bernie Creham v. Inntrepreneur

Donald Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the implications of the Appeal Court decision in the case of Bernie Creham against Inntrepreneur for *(a)* the licensed trade, *(b)* competition policy and *(c)* protection of consumers. [178953]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is for parties involved in the beer industry to consider how this decision may affect their commercial relationships and for the UK competition authorities to consider any wider matters it may raise relating to competition law and consumer protection.

Business Fraud

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many Stop Now Orders have been issued since their introduction; and how many were issued by each type of enforcer. [179265]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 17 June 2004]:* Since the introduction, 15 Stop Now Orders have been obtained. In addition, three interim Orders have been obtained. 13 of these, including the three interim Orders have been obtained by local authority trading standards departments. The Office of Fair Trading has obtained the remaining five Orders.

Business Support Schemes

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much money her Department has saved as a result of the recent rationalisation of its business support schemes. [179247]

Nigel Griffiths: The level of support provided to business is expected to remain unchanged at around £500 million per annum.

The primary purposes of the Business Support review is to increase value created through the investment of taxpayers' funds and to improve the customer experience in dealing with DTI. Cost savings of £740,000 have already been achieved from administrative efficiency improvements in delivering Business Support in 2003–04 against the 2002–03 baseline. Further administrative cost savings are projected for 2004–05 and 2005–06.

Businesses (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new businesses have started up in the parliamentary constituency of Tamworth since 1997. [179962]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 115,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in the last quarter of 2003, including 1,300 business start-ups in the county of Staffordshire (which includes Tamworth parliamentary constituency). The latest yearly figures show 465,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2003. This represents a 19 per cent. increase on the year before. In 2003 there were 5,500 business start-ups in the county of Staffordshire.

Barclays data for the county of Staffordshire are not available before 2003 and data are not available for Tamworth parliamentary constituency separately.

DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for Tamworth local authority and Lichfield local authority (which both contain parts of Tamworth parliamentary constituency) are shown in the following table for the period 1997 to 2002. Data for 2003 will be available in autumn 2004.

VAT registrations: 1997–2002

	Tamworth	*Lichfield*
1997	155	335
1998	185	340
1999	190	340
2000	170	345
2001	200	325
2002	215	330

Source:
Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2002, Small Business Service www.sbs.gov.uk/statistics/analytical/vatstats.php

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

Carers' Rights

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the merits of introducing a right for the carers of older or disabled adults *(a)* to have paid leave from work and *(b)* to request flexible working; and if she will make a statement. [179246]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The DTI is taking forward a programme of work to explore what additional support could be provided to people balancing work and caring responsibilities, in ways that meet both individual and business needs. The work includes a series of roundtables in each region across the country, and in Scotland and Wales. Carers UK and the Princess Royal Trust for Carers have each hosted a roundtable to hear directly from carers and employers about their experiences and needs. In addition, a Citizens' Jury has also taken place to further identify priorities and potential options for the future.

This will help shape future policy and the review of the flexible working and other family friendly laws, planned for 2006. An issue which my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has indicated should be a priority is, subject to that review, extending the flexible working law to wider groups of carers, such as carers of elderly or sick relatives.

Coal Claims Handling Agreement

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on what dates this year Ministers and officials have met the Law Society to discuss the coal claims handling agreement. [180062]

Nigel Griffiths: Members of the Department's Coal Liabilities Unit last met with the Law Society on 29 April and they are due to meet next on 7 July. They have also previously met with the Law Society on 15 January.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what her assessment is of the likely impact of additional rationalisation of staff in her Department on its ability to deliver its priorities and its statutory responsibilities. [179402]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 18 June 2004]:* My Department has developed plans that will enable it to deliver more efficiently DTI's priorities and responsibilities, as set out in the DTI Strategy published in September 2003. These plans will be reflected in the public spending settlements for 2006–08 when they are announced.

Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many complaints against *(a)* employment agencies and *(b)* businesses required investigation by the Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate in 2002–03. [180041]

Mr. Sutcliffe: In the period 2002–03, the Employment Agency Standards (EAS) Inspectorate received and investigated 716 complaints. The figure for 2003–04 was 1,057. Data broken down between employment agencies and employment business are not available.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many convictions there were of *(a)* employment agencies and *(b)* businesses by the Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate in 2002–03; and how many resulted in fines. [180042]

Mr. Sutcliffe: In the period 2002–03, the Employment Agency Standards (EAS) obtained eight convictions against persons who operated as employment agencies. In total £5,735 was awarded in compensation for the workers who gave evidence in these cases. One employment agent was fined £500. There were no convictions against employment business.

In the same period EAS recovered over £14,000 in workers wages from employment agencies and employment businesses without the need to go to court.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many *(a)* entertainment and *(b)* model agencies were investigated by the Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate in 2002–03; how many convictions resulted; and in how many cases fines were imposed. [180043]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Employment Agency Standards (EAS) Inspectorate investigated 716 complaints during this period. The data available are not broken down by sector of the recruitment industry.

In 2002–03 the EAS obtained eight convictions against persons who operated as entertainment agencies, i.e. finding work for entertainers or background extras on film and television productions. In total, £5,735 was awarded in compensation for the witnesses in these cases. One entertainment agent was fined £500. In the same period there were no convictions against model agencies.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many applications to prevent *(a)* employment agencies and *(b)* businesses trading were made by the Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate in 2003. [180044]

Mr. Sutcliffe: In 2003, the Employment Agency Standards (EAS) Inspectorate made two applications under section 3*(a)* of the Employment Agencies Act 1973 to prohibit persons from being concerned with the running of an employment agency or employment business. Both applications were successful and the persons were prohibited for the maximum term of 10 years.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what targets she has set for the Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate in relation to visiting *(a)* employment agencies and *(b)* businesses; [180045]

(2) what performance targets have been set for the Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate; and whether she plans to publish an annual report on the Inspectorate's activities. [180046]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Employment Agency Standards (EAS) Inspectorate will be publishing an annual report this summer, which will give full details on the Inspectorate's activities and objectives. As soon as it is published, a copy of the report will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Grants for Research and Development

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what assessment she has made of the impact that the decision to cut the funding available for the Grants for Research and Development Scheme will have on UK businesses; [178754]

(2) how often she intends to hold competitions for funding through the Grants for Research and Development Scheme; [178755]

(3) what discussions she has had with business groups about the decision to cut the funding available for the Grants for Research and Development Scheme; [178756]

(4) how many firms have benefited from the Grants for Research and Development Scheme in each quarter since its introduction. [178761]

Nigel Griffiths: The Grant for R and D and its predecessor Smart has helped an estimated 4,800 companies with £368 million in grants.

This is part of a total business support package from the DTI with an estimated £500 million invested, each year.

The method of allocating R and D grants between 1986 and 2000 was the same as the one re-introduced in 2003. This is considered more effective in targeting resources than the one in operation between 2001–03.

Miners' Compensation Claims

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps have been taken to recover public money where solicitors and others have been paid in full through the coal claims handling agreement, but have charged the claimant a success fee. [180093]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 22 June 2004]:* I am advised that costs cannot be recouped where a solicitor has also charged a claimant a success fee since the fees paid under the Agreements are legally enforceable.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many claims under the coal claims handling agreement have been subject to the Schedule 56 disputes procedures; and how many of these have had their costs paid in full. [180094]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 22 June 2004]:* Eleven. None have received costs payable under schedule 17 of the revised CHA.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether it was specifically agreed by her Department under the claims handling agreement with the Union of Democratic Mineworkers that a limited liability company was an appropriate body to represent claimants. [180095]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 22 June 2004]:* The choice of the UDM to process claims through Vendside is a matter for the UDM and its members.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the Union of Democratic Mineworkers is treated in the same way as a firm of solicitors in representing claimants under the claims handling agreement. [180096]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 22 June 2004]:* Yes, but there is a difference in the costs paid by the Department, which are lower in the UDM agreement.

Newsagents (Display Space)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research she has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the difficulties experienced by small circulation newspapers and magazines in obtaining display space in newsagents. [179725]

Mr. Sutcliffe: None.

Oil Imports

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to make the UK economy less dependent on imports from the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries; and if she will make a statement. [179764]

Mr. Timms: The UK is currently a net exporter of oil and oil products, and, largely due to geography, imports relatively little oil from OPEC countries. However, the UK is expected to become a net importer of oil by 2010 and the Government therefore recognise the need to take a longer term strategic international approach to energy security. This approach is outlined in the 2003 Energy White Paper, "Our Energy Future—creating a low carbon economy", available at http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/whitepaper/index.shtml. The aim is not to reduce dependence on OPEC per se, but rather to promote more diverse sources of supply, fuel types and trading routes and to put in place policies that will help ease the economy away from power supplied primarily through fossil fuels as well as bringing about reductions in carbon dioxide emissions.

Retail Groceries Sector

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the incidence of predatory below-cost pricing of groceries by retailers; and what assessment she has made of the effect of such pricing on *(a)* food producers and *(b)* competition in the retail groceries sector. [180190]

Mr. Sutcliffe: None. It is for the Office of Fair Trading (OFT), as the UK's independent competition authority, to decide whether to investigate competition issues. Any information or evidence concerning market failure or anti-competitive practices should be submitted directly to the OFT.

Tidal/Wave Powered Electricity

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what help her Department will give to *(a)* tidal and *(b)* wave powered electricity; and what help it will give to assist UK manufacturing to provide the equipment. [180061]

Mr. Timms: The main form of support for all renewable technologies is the Renewables Obligation (RO) which provides a stable and long-term market for renewable electricity. Electricity generation from both wave and tidal technologies is eligible for the RO.

However, these technologies are further from market and still at the developmental stage. Therefore the principal form of support has been through the DTI's Research and Development Programme, which since 1997, has committed around £15 million towards the development of these technologies.

The recent Renewable Innovation Review undertaken by the DTI and the Carbon Trust www.dti.gov.uk/energy/renewables/policy/renewables_innovation_review.shtml considered the issue of funding for the next phase of development of these technologies which includes small scale demonstration and pre-commercial stages.

The Government have received a number of representations from the industry and others about the form of support that is required to ensure the lead we have established in the UK is maintained.

The DTI is currently considering what the options are for providing further support and how we support the industry through the next phase of development We recognise the significant industrial opportunities which successful development of wave and tide power technology could provide for the UK.

University Business Spin-out

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many private firms have been spun-out of UK universities in each month since 2002. [178763]

Ms Hewitt: Information on spin-off numbers is gathered on an annual basis. The Higher Education-Business Interaction (HEBI) survey has recorded the following number of spin-offs over the last three years:

2000–01:203

2001–02: 248

2002–03:213

UK universities' spin-off performance compares favourably with US universities. UK universities identified one spin-off firm for every £15 million of research expenditure, compared with one for every £44 million in the US.

WH Smith

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations she has received about WH Smith refusing to distribute certain newspapers and magazines. [179724]

Mr. Sutcliffe: None.

Wind Farms

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions she has had with the British manufacturing industry on ensuring that they are able to provide the turbine manufacturing capability for new wind farm developments in the UK. [179763]

Mr. Timms: The Department is taking a keen interest in developing opportunities for UK companies. This has included a recent request to each of the key European Wind Turbine Manufacturing companies to set up contacts within the Department, to identify inward investment opportunities and to press home the message about the capability of the UK to supply to this growing market. Meetings have also taken place in the UK with Vestas Celtic, PeterBrotherhood and DEWind in relation to developing their supply chains and increasing UK content in projects. A programme of 'meet the wind turbine company buyer' events has been started with successful events so far in Newcastle, Hamburg and Aberdeen. Further events are planned for Manchester, Belfast, Yorkshire and Humberside, East of England and Scotland.

Work-related Diseases

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many claims for *(a)* chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and *(b)* vibration white finger have been submitted by (i) Richmonds of Worksop and (ii) Richmonds of Doncaster. [179913]

Nigel Griffiths: All coal health claims handled by Richmonds are registered via their Worksop Office.

173 chronic obstructive pulmonary disease claims and 267 vibration white finger claims have been submitted.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Mobile Advertising (Planning Permission)

8. **Colin Burgon:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance he issues to local authorities on planning permission requirements for mobile advertising sites along major road routes. [179836]

Phil Hope: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does give guidance to local planning authorities on the control of outdoor advertisements. Before giving their consent to an advertisement local planning authorities have to consider the amenity and public safety aspects. Advertisements which are likely to distract motorists on a motorway or trunk road are unlikely to be approved.

Affordable Housing (North-west)

9. **Mr. Jack:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to review his policies affecting the provision of affordable housing in the north-west. [179837]

Keith Hill: National policies for affordable housing are currently under review. A review of Regional Planning Guidance for the North West, including housing provision in the region, will begin later this year.

Business Improvement Districts

10. **Ms Christine Russell:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what support his Department offers communities interested in piloting business improvement districts. [179838]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is supporting a three-year project, managed by the Association of Town Centre Management, piloting 22 Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in England and Wales. The experiences of the pilots have been very helpful to us in framing the enabling Regulations for BIDS, on which we have recently consulted.

Regional Assembly (North-west)

11. **Ann Winterton:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects to hold a referendum on establishing an elected regional assembly in the north-west of England. [179839]

Mr. Raynsford: The Government intend to bring forward orders enabling referendums to be held in the three northern regions this autumn.

Supporting People Programme

12. **Sandra Gidley:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the Supporting People programme. [179841]

Yvette Cooper: The Supporting People programme, introduced on 1 April 2003, provides housing-related support to over 1.2 million vulnerable people to help them sustain their tenancy and live more independently in their home. Over £3.5 billion has been allocated through the Supporting People programme in 2003–04 to 2004–05.

Public Service Delivery

13. **Andrew George:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to ensure that decisions about delivery of public services are made at *(a)* regional and *(b)* local authority levels. [179842]

Phil Hope: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is initiating a debate on the future of local government which will build on the current responsibility of authorities to make decisions about the delivery of a wide range of public services in their areas and to influence the delivery of others.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects to hold referendums this autumn on whether people in three northern regions want an elected regional assembly.

Local Council Benefits Administration

14. **Mrs. Humble:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps his Department is taking through the award of beacon status to raise the standard of local council benefits administration. [179843]

Mr. Raynsford: In April I awarded beacon status to Blackpool borough council and Salford city council, in recognition of their excellent performance in benefits administration. Both councils have now begun work to share their good practice with others.

Barker Review

Matthew Green: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects to publish the Government's response to the Barker Review of Housing Supply in the UK. [179884]

Keith Hill: The Government do not intend to publish a single response to the Barker Review of Housing Supply in the UK. Kate Barker made a number of recommendations and, as my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister and my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer indicated in an initial reaction to the report when it was published, the time scale for responding to each of these will vary. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister intend to announce our decision on new regional arrangements for planning by the end this year, following a consultation exercise to be launched next month, and have them in place by September 2005. Also in September 2005, we will publish a national housing market affordability goal, again, following consultation. Our aim will be to keep stakeholders fully informed as the work develops and to publish regular reports on overall progress.

Domestic Violence

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what measures his Department has taken to raise awareness of the 24-hour domestic violence helpline. [178811]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Home Office have worked with Refuge, Women's Aid and Comic Relief to publicise the 24-hour national domestic violence helpline through a £1 million publicity campaign using radio, women's press, washroom posters and supermarket till receipt advertising.

English Heritage

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions he has had with the Chief Executive of English Heritage on the implications of its decision to abandon its regional structure. [175353]

Yvette Cooper: My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister has not recently discussed the regional structure of English Heritage with its Chief Executive.

Housing Funding (Warrington)

Helen Jones: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much housing funding has been allocated to Warrington Borough Council in each year since 1997. [180085]

Keith Hill: Warrington Borough Council have been allocated a total of almost £43 million in housing funding in the financial years 1997–98 to 2004–05. The allocations on a year by year basis are as set out in the following table:

Financial Year	*Total £000*
1997–1998	2,779
1998–1999	3,584
1999–2000	3,744
2000–2001	4,834
2001–2002	7,197
2002–2003	7,245
2003–2004	6,882
2004–2005	6,733

In addition, Warrington provisionally have a place on the Arms Length Management Organisation programme. A total of £18.3 million of extra funding for 2004–05 and 2005–06 has been allocated to Warrington to help achieve the Decent Homes standard in their own housing stock. This is conditional upon the outcome of an inspection of Warrington's housing service by the Audit Commission.

Infill Housing

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will allow small infill houses to be built where there is a building moratorium in place. [180054]

Keith Hill: This will be a matter for Chorley Borough Council in the first instance, taking into account the policies in its Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Postal Ballots (10 June)

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects to receive the report of the Electoral Commission on the all-postal election pilots on 10 June. [178718]

Mr. Raynsford: The Government expect to receive the report from the Electoral Commission on the June all-postal election pilots by 13 September 2004.

Social Housing

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether local district councils may build *(a)* council housing and *(b)* old age pensioner bungalows for rent. [180052]

Keith Hill: There is no bar on local district councils building council housing or old age pensioner bungalows for rent. However an authority will need to demonstrate that this provides good value for money compared with provision through a Registered Social Landlord

Matthew Green: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the progress of the framework being drawn up by the Housing Corporation and the London boroughs for the pooling of nominations for new lettings across London on a sub-regional basis. [179885]

Keith Hill: A draft Nominations Protocol has been produced which sets out the principles which it is recommended that the five sub regions in London adopt for dividing up nominations for schemes funded by the Housing Corporation on a sub-regional basis. This was issued for consultation in February 2004. The responses to consultation are being considered by a steering group comprising representatives from the Housing Corporation, Association of London Government (ALG) and London Housing Federation (LHF). A finalised Protocol will be issued in the summer.

A good practice guide on nominations in general and the sharing of sub regional nominations in particular will be published at the same time.

A study of existing systems for tracking nominations within the London boroughs has been completed and a report will be issued shortly. This will set out the limited existing technological options available and advise on the costs of implementing a range of options for an electronic tracking system which could operate within and across sub regions.

Matthew Green: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of *(a)* newly-arising need for social housing and *(b)* the backlog of need for social housing. [179886]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not make national or regional estimates of housing need, as such estimates are unable to reflect adequately the diversity of needs and priorities at the local level. In the past, such estimates have led to the provision of new housing in areas where this did not represent the best use of resources. However, we have accepted in principle the case made by Kate Barker in her Review of Housing Supply in the UK that a significant increase in social housing is needed and will be working through the detailed implications over the next 18 months.

Regional Housing Boards—in drawing up Regional Housing Strategies—Regional Planning Bodies and local authorities are the main bodies charged with making assessments of housing need in order to carry out their housing functions.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does collect and publish data from local authorities on decisions made on applications for assistance under the homelessness legislation and the number of households in temporary accommodation.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 24 June 2004

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Dee Estuary

14. **Mr. Ben Chapman:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the environmental impact of dredging in the Dee estuary. [180219]

Mr. Morley: Dredging in the Dee estuary is regulated by the Environment Agency in Wales with additional consents being required from both the Welsh Assembly Government and the Department for Transport.

As there is an English component to the conservation interests on the Dee, I would expect to be consulted regarding any decision to allow dredging to take place should it affect English interests.

Fisheries

15. **Mr. Lazarowicz:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to ensure the sustainability of fish stocks around the UK. [180221]

Mr. Bradshaw: There are a range of national and EU measures in place to ensure the sustainability of fish stocks in our waters. The Prime Minister's Strategy Unit has made far-reaching recommendations for new measures and we will be spending fully to these proposals by the end of the year.

Wild Animals

16. **Jim Knight:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to simplify the legislation relating to the keeping of wild animals. [180222]

Mr. Morley: The Department will be publishing a consultation paper on 28 June setting out proposals for improvements to the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976, which regulates the keeping of dangerous wild animals by private individuals, and will also soon be publishing a draft Animal Welfare Bill.

Housing

17. **Mr. Liddell-Grainger:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps her Department is planning to take to mitigate the impact of building new homes upon underground aquifers. [180223]

Mr. Morley: Water companies have a duty to supply water to domestic customers. As part of this they develop 25 year water resource plans to meet future demands of water, including those arising from new housing development.

It is crucial that new housing and other developments incorporate water efficiency measures, and the Government encourage planners to consult with the Environment Agency and water companies at an early stage.

Greyhounds

18. **Mr. Amess:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many representations she has received this year on the welfare of racing greyhounds; and if she will make a statement. [180224]

Mr. Bradshaw: I regret that the Department is unable to provide such detail because of the many different ways in which representations are made, including by letter, e mail, petitions and postcard campaigns.

There has been a large number of representations on greyhounds this year, encouraged, no doubt, by a campaign run by a major animal welfare organisation.

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many people have been prosecuted under the Abandonment of Animals Act 1960 with regard to greyhounds in each of the last 10 years. [179232]

Paul Goggins: I have been asked to reply.

It is not possible to identify those prosecutions under the Abandonment of Animals Act 1960 that relate to greyhounds because details of the circumstances of the offences are not collected centrally.

Civil Servants

19. **Dr. Cable:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the implications of the Gershon Review for levels of staffing in her Department. [180225]

Margaret Beckett: The settlement for the 2004 Spending Review, including the outcome to the efficiency review, has not been finalised yet. Once it has been concluded, the potential impact on staff will be identified.

Coastal Defence

21. **Mr. Gibb:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the priority score criteria used in assessing coastal defence schemes. [180227]

Mr. Morley: Defra funds projects based on a published priority score system which applies equally to all projects, coastal or otherwise. The score takes account of the number of people protected, benefits as compared to costs, and environmental protection and enhancement. Eligible projects which score at or above the announced threshold will be funded. The threshold score for projects to start in 2004–05 is 20.

Single Farm Payment

22. **Andrew Selous:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received on the proposed cross-compliance conditions for the single farm payment. [180228]

Margaret Beckett: The deadline for responses to the consultation on proposed and possible measures for cross compliance ended on 20 June. We have received 451 presentations from a wide range of stakeholders and officials are now considering the responses.

Aluminium Powder

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the trends have been since 1997 in respect of the concentration of aluminium powder in air. [179457]

Alun Michael: Defra monitors ambient aluminium concentrations at three locations: Chilton, Oxfordshire; Styrrup, Yorkshire; and Wraymires, Cumbria. The following table shows annual mean air concentrations from 1997 to 2002 (the latest year that data are available). Details of the monitoring data are available in reports published on Defra's Air Quality Archive at www.airquality.co.uk.

Annual mean air concentration of aluminium (ng m^{-3})

	Chilton	*Styrrup*	*Wraymires*
1997	110	145	54
1998	92	137	58
1999	68	110	67
2000	100	140	49
2001	76	110	42
2002	82	120	40

Beef Exports

Sir Archy Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she last met officials from the European Commission to discuss beef exports. [180226]

Mr. Bradshaw: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, meets Commissioner Byrne regularly at Agriculture Councils to discuss various issues, including beef exports. DEFRA officials also have regular meetings with officials from the Commission.

Cetacean By-catch

Ms Atherton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what conclusions she has drawn from this season's monitoring of cetacean by-catch. [179267]

Mr. Bradshaw: I have not yet received the report of this season's monitoring of cetacean by-catch. However, as soon as I receive it I shall give careful consideration to whether any further regulatory measures are necessary to reduce cetacean by-catch caused by interactions with fisheries.

Cod Recovery Programme

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the impact of multi-rig trawls on the cod recovery programme. [180220]

Mr. Bradshaw: We are concerned about the increased catching efficiency of multi-rig trawls. They have the potential to undermine restrictions on fishing effort in the cod recovery programme.

Common Agricultural Policy

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on payments for orchards under Common Agricultural Policy reform, with particular reference to the eligibility for payments of different types of orchards. [178200]

Alun Michael: Under the CAP reform agreement reached last year, the new Single Payment will not normally be payable on land under permanent crops, including orchard fruit. This rule applies throughout the European Community. The scope of a possible exception for traditional grazed orchards, in line with current provisions, is being explored with the European Commission.

Entitlements to subsidy under the new scheme will be established in 2005 on the basis of eligible land declared in that year, which includes having the land at his disposal for at least a 10 month period. The start of this period may be any date from 1 October this year to 30 April next, at the grower's discretion.

GM Crops

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer from the Minister for Public Health of 11 December 2003, *Official Report*, columns 596–7W, on GM crops, what *(a)* notice and *(b)* formal communication the Food Standards Agency gave to her Department of its intention to support the approval of the application of the use of Bt 11 GM maize in food at the EC Standing Committee for the food chain and animal health meeting on 8 December 2003. [179970]

Mr. Morley: The Food Standards Agency wrote on 30 October last year seeking the clearance from all relevant government departments of the UK's voting position on Bt11 sweet maize at the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health. Additionally my Department is kept informed of the progress of applications as they proceed through the Novel Foods regulatory process.

Orchards

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the position will be under the mid-term review of the Common Agricultural Policy of orchards which are returned to general agriculture. [177787]

Alun Michael: Entitlements to subsidy under the new Single Payment Scheme will be established in 2005 on the basis of eligible land declared in that year. The Single Payment will not normally be payable on land under permanent crops, including orchard fruit. This rule applies throughout the European Community. The scope of a possible exception for grazed orchards is being explored with the European Commission.

A grower who decided that he wished to return land to general agriculture would need to do so before the beginning of the 10-month qualifying period in order to be eligible for the Single Payment. This period can start on any day from 1 October this year to 30 April next at the grower's discretion.

Claims to establish new entitlements in subsequent years will not generally be permitted. However, use of the national reserve to accommodate new entrants is one of the possibilities being considered in our current consultation exercise.

WALES

Euro Task Force

Mrs Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how much money has been spent by the Wales Euro Task Force on preparing Welsh firms for the introduction of the euro; how that money was spent; and what actions the funding facilitated. [178293]

Mr. Touhig: The National Assembly for Wales funded the Wales Euro Taskforce which was in existence until 30 June 2002 and then subsequently a consultant until October 2003. The total cost was £64,000.

The Task Force remit was to disseminate information on the Euro, providing help for businesses in Wales. This work was taken forward in a number of ways including presentations, conferences, exhibitions, a telephone helpline with access to an expert panel, an information website and leaflet distribution.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many employees in his Department have *(a)* signed a formal opt out from and *(b)* are exempt from the Working Time Directive; and how many employees in his Department have recorded hours, including any accruing on a flexitime basis, in excess of the maximum allowed under the Working Time Directive in the last month for which figures are available. [178369]

Mr. Touhig: Two members of staff have voluntarily opted out of this directive and are therefore exempt from the Working Time Directive.

The Wales Office has a duty to ensure the health and safety of its staff. Therefore no member of staff at the Wales Office is asked to work hours in excess of the Working Time Directive (an average of 48 hours a week over a 17-week period).

TREASURY

Cigarette Duties

Julie Morgan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much the Government earned in revenue from tobacco duty and VAT on cigarettes in financial years *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2002–03 and *(c)* 2003–04. [180258]

John Healey: Tobacco duty revenue figures are published by HM Customs and Excise in the Tobacco Factsheet, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House and from Customs' website.

Customs do not collect data on VAT from individual goods or services.

Correspondence

Mr. Burns: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when a reply will be sent to the hon. Member for West Chelmsford in response to his letter of 11 March to the Inland Revenue concerning his constituents, Mr. and Mrs. Moss. [180315]

Dawn Primarolo: The Inland Revenue replied to the hon. Member on 29 April 2004.

Departmental Websites

Mr. Heald: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total cost of his Department's websites, including those of its agencies, was in the most recent year for which figures are available. [178790]

Ruth Kelly: The costs and traffic figures for each website operated by the agencies and Departments for which the Chancellor of the Exchequer is responsible, during the 2003–04 financial year, were as follows:

Department/site address	*Direct costs (£)*	*Visits*	*Page impressions (million)*
HM Customs and Excise			
www.hmce.gov.uk	[1]393,000	3.7 million	—
www.uktradeinfo.com	[1]285,000	214,336	1.05
HM Treasury			
www.hm-treasury.gov.uk	[1]197,000	2.6 million	41.4
www.euro.gov.uk	32,000	660,000	
www.isb.gov.uk	[2]62,785		—
Inland Revenue			
www.ir.gov.uk	[3]1.9 million	9.9 million	110.6
Office for National Statistics			
www.statistics.gov.uk	[1]1.1 million	7.14 million	60.6 million
National Savings and Investments			
www.nsandi.com	[1]156,180	5.5 million	16.7
Office of Government Commerce			
www.ogc.gov.uk www.sds.ogc.gov.uk www.gps.ogc.gov.uk www.co.ogc.gov.uk www.supplyinggovernment.gov.uk https://www.epims.ogc.gov.uk www.ogc-top.co.uk	226,000	592,551	—
OGC buying solution			
OGCbuying.solutions corporate website Energy Website G-Cat S-Cat Portfolio Portal Web enabled 'Central Product Database' and e-commerce system	499,999	439,268	—
Royal Mint			
www.royalmint.gov.uk	[1]93,000	966,047	7.2
UK Debt Management Office			
www.dmo.gov.uk www.pwlb.gov.uk www.crnd.gov.uk	[1]85,000	384,533	1.4
Valuation Office			
http://www.voa.gov.uk/	[1]42,000	26,896	2.4

[1] Staff costs are included.
[2] Costs include database development work for this joint Treasury-Cabinet Office website.
[3] Of this 1.9 million, 1.4 million is a one off cost relating to the redesign of the Inland Revenue's website.

Employment Levels

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the effect of employment levels on the economy. [180333]

Ruth Kelly: The performance of the UK labour market over recent years has been strong by both international and historical standards. The UK has the highest employment rate among the G7 economies. Over 1.8 million new jobs have been created since 1997. High employment levels contribute to growth and prosperity.

Office for National Statistics

Mr. Baron: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to change the way statistics related to *(a)* cancer, *(b)* neurology, *(c)* ophthalmology, *(d)* nursing and *(e)* midwifery are recorded by the Office For National Statistics. [180202]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr Baron dated 24 June 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question on what plans I have to change the way statistics related to *(a)* cancer, *(b)* neurology, *(c)* ophthalmology, *(d)* nursing and *(e)* midwifery are recorded by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). (180202)

ONS maintains the National Cancer Registry, which collates information collected by the nine regional cancer registries in England. The way in which cancer data are collected, recorded and validated by regional registries is likely to change as the NHS National Programme for IT (NPfIT) develops. In the longer term changes will follow from the introduction in the NHS of the National Cancer Dataset.

Statistics showing the numbers of people in employment in each occupation are available regularly from the Labour Force Survey (LFS), which is carried out by ONS. This separately identifies figures for opthalmic opticians, nurses and midwives. There are no plans to change the analysis of people in employment from the LFS, although it is planned that the LFS itself will be incorporated in the Continuous Population Survey in 2008. At a later date, it is likely that a new classification of occupations will be introduced.

No other statistics on the topics listed in your question are recorded by ONS, and there are no immediate plans to change this.

Smoking-related Illness

Julie Morgan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent estimate he has made of the cost to the economy of smoking-related illnesses and fatalities. [180259]

Mr. Boateng: The White Paper Smoking Kills (1998) estimated the cost to the NHS of treating ill-health caused by smoking was £1.7 billion a year.

Unemployment (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the long-term *(a)* adult and *(b)* youth unemployment rates were in Tamworth constituency in each of the last 10 years. [179968]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who I have asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Brian Jenkins, dated 24 June 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment. (179968)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. However, the LFS sample size is too small to give reliable estimates of unemployment in the Tamworth constituency.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for local areas including parliamentary constituencies.

The table below shows JSA claimants claiming for over 12 months as a percentage of all claimants, for all ages and for those aged 18–24 years old in the Tamworth constituency. The figures are annual averages for each year since 1996. Comparable figures are not available for earlier years.

People claiming JSA for 12 months or more, as percentage of all claimants

Percentage

	All ages	*18 to 24 years*
1996	29.5	4.8
1997	24.1	3.2
1998	21.5	3.0
1999	20.9	0.7
2000	20.9	0.5
2001	17.7	[1]—
2002	14.5	[1]—
2003	10.0	[1]—

[1] Figure not shown to protect individuals' confidentiality

DEFENCE

Databases

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the fields of the *(a)* Estates and Lands database and *(b)* his Department's Service personnel databases. [176382]

Mr. Caplin: Defence Estates (DE) controls and utilises numerous databases which encompass a wide range of information related to the day-to-day management of the land we own and use. These databases include the Defence Property Gazetteer Maintenance (which includes the disposal programme), E Terrier (which provides details of MOD ownership and legal titles), the MOD Sites Information System and the Parliamentary Business database. In some cases these comprise well over 100 individual fields.

Excluding the three Services, which all have a multitude of individual databases, so far as the Service personnel databases are concerned, the armed forces Personnel Administration Agency alone has in excess of 300 individual databases, each one having numerous separate fields. The individual armed Services have many other databases.

I am therefore unable to provide the information requested as it is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many people have left employment in his Department because of *(a)* anxiety, *(b)* stress, *(c)* depression and *(d)* other mental health reasons in each year since 1997. [175670]

Mr. Caplin: In the seven year period 1997–2003, 959 Regular Service personnel were medically discharged from the United Kingdom Armed Forces due to a mental health disorder. The Defence Analytical Services Agency codes the specific conditions according to the World Health Organization's International Statistical Classification of diseases and health-related problems 10th revision (ICD-10). According to this system it is not possible to identify separately all anxiety, stress, and depressive conditions as there is considerable overlap between them.

Table A: UK Regular armed forces medically discharged for mental health disorders, 1997–2003

Mental health disorder grouping	*ICD-10 codes*	*1997–2003*							
		total	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
All mental health disorders	F00-F99	959	122	147	101	127	156	160	146
Mood/affective disorders, and mental and behavioural disorders associated with the puerperium, not elsewhere classified	F30–39, F53	314	27	53	23	44	50	58	59
Neurotic, stress-related and somatoform disorders	F40-F48	448	58	60	58	57	75	74	66
Other mental health disorders	F00-F29, F50-F52, F54-F99	197	37	34	20	26	31	28	21

Centrally held figures show that during the period 1 April 1997 to 31 March 2003, 1,750 civilian staff have retired due to ill health. It is not recorded how many of this number retired due to mental health disorders.

The figure is full-time equivalent, this is a measure of the size of the workforce that takes account of the fact that some people work part-time.

Empty Houses

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for how many empty houses his Department is responsible; and if he will make a statement. [179354]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 18 June 2004]:* Defence Estates (the Ministry of Defence Agency responsible) is aware of 7,700 empty properties in mainland UK, as at 31 March 2004. Of those:

over 900 are planned for disposal

over 1,600 are held for future Service deployments

some 550 are empty awaiting modernisation

The remainder are available to let or are under offer to Service families. There may be a relatively small number of additional properties which are empty, for which information is not held centrally.

Land Sales

Mr. Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether, if he decides to relocate HQ Land away from Wilton, the Crichel Down rules will apply to the sale of the site. [179477]

Mr. Caplin: It is the Ministry of Defence's normal policy to consider the application of the Crichel Down rules in all instances when disposing of surplus land. However, application depends on detailed analysis and it would be premature to say whether the rules would apply to the Wilton site.

Medals (Arctic Convoys)

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence who and which Government offices were involved in the recent review of the award of medals to Arctic convoy veterans. [179543]

Mr. Caplin: The review was conducted by Defence Ministers, supported by officials. Other Government Departments were not involved, but reference was made to contemporary documents of the Inter-departmental Committee on the Grant of Honours, Decorations and Medals in Time of War.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the up-to-date position is on the award of medals to the Arctic convoy veterans. [179554]

Mr. Caplin: I refer my hon. Friend to my reply of 1 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 595–96W to my hon. Friend the Member for Nottingham, North (Mr. Allen).

Military Vehicles

Mr. Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many military vehicle drivers have been stopped by the police for speeding on *(a)* the A303 and *(b)* the M3 in the past 12 months. [179480]

Mr. Caplin: No records are maintained to indicate whether any military vehicle drivers may have been stopped for speeding on the A303 or M3 in the last 12 months.

MOD Sites

Mr. Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many prospective purchasers have *(a)* made initial enquiries and *(b)* negotiated in respect of the Dean Hill site; when he expects to conclude a sale; and if he will make a statement. [179483]

Mr. Caplin: Defence Estates has undertaken an expressions of interests campaign ahead of marketing the site. There were 175 initial inquiries, with 54 parties having expressed an interest in acquiring all or parts of the site.

Our current aim is to market the site in spring 2005, subject to legal advice on whether the former owner (Crichel Down) rules apply.

No negotiations have yet taken place, but discussions on conservation issues are in progress.

RAF Boulmer

Mr. Beith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much of the land occupied by RAF Boulmer other than for married quarters is *(a)* publicly owned and *(b)* rented; and whether any of it is governed by (i) lease conditions under which the landowner can require reinstatement to agricultural condition and (ii) other restrictions which if enforced would lead to a cut to public funds when the lease is surrendered. [169173]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* In total, RAF Boulmer comprises an area of some 59 ha, of which around 46 ha is Crown freehold and 13 ha is leased. The station is split into three separate areas: a main site, the old administrative site and an accommodation site.

The main site is publicly owned. No restrictions apply. The old administrative site, which is also publicly owned, is in the process of disposal and the Ministry of Defence is committed to reinstate it to its original condition. The accommodation site, which includes the Search and Rescue Unit, is partially leased.

Of this leased area, just over 4 ha could be left as existing or at the landlord's request be returned to original (agricultural) condition. The remainder has to be returned to original (agricultural) condition or compensation paid in lieu.

It is too early to assess the precise impact on receipts, but this is only one of a number of factors which would be taken into account in taking decisions.

UN Operations

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what ongoing British involvement there will be in Iraq after the 30 June 2004 transfer of power. [174518]

Mr. Hoon: Following the assumption of authority by the Interim Iraqi Government on 30 June, British troops will contribute to the Multi National Force carrying out a range of tasks including the provision of security and building the Iraqi security forces. The detailed arrangements under which the Multi National Force will operate are set out in UN Security Council Resolution 1546 and the letters to the Security Council from Prime Minister Allawi and Secretary Powell.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Fire Brigades Union

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what part he has played in mediating a settlement between the Fire Brigades Union and the fire authorities. [179340]

Mr. Raynsford: Following the May 2002 pay claim from the Fire Brigades Union, Ministers encouraged the two sides to reach a negotiated settlement. The June 2003 agreement which ended the firefighters dispute set out a clear path for pay improvement linked to modernisation of the Fire and Rescue Service subject to some further negotiations. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister hopes that the parties will recognise that a negotiated settlement is the only way forward.

Housing

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many housing units were built in 2003–04 in the Pathfinder areas of Merseyside; and how many are expected to be built in 2004–05. [179729]

Keith Hill: No housing dwellings were completed in 2003–04 in the Sefton area of the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder. The forecast for 2004–05 is 52 housing dwellings. In Wirral, 42 dwellings were completed in 2003–04 and the forecast for 2004–05 is 105. Figures are not yet available for the Liverpool Pathfinder area in 2003–04, but the HMRI Delivery Plan forecasts that 1,301 dwellings will be provided over the period 2004–06.

Adam Price: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many local authorities in England have chosen *(a)* stock transfer, *(b)* Arms Length Management and *(c)* Private Finance Initiative. [180185]

Keith Hill: The information is as follows:

Since 2001:

(a) 35 local authorities have transferred some or all of their housing stock to Registered Social Landlords, with 29 others on stock transfer programmes that have not yet transferred their stock.

(b) 33 local authorities have established one or more Arms Length Management Organisations, with 12 other authorities on programmes waiting to do so.

(c) three local authorities have signed Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contracts for the management of their housing stock, with a further nine local authorities in the procurement stage.

Included in the figures are 13 local authorities that have chosen two of the available solutions for part of their stock, and one local authority that has used all three programmes.

Adam Price: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what representations he has received from local authorities in England seeking direct Government investment options to improve standards in their housing stock. [180187]

Keith Hill: Hammersmith and Fulham and Camden are the only local authorities who themselves have requested direct investment from the Government to meet the Decent Homes programme.

Adam Price: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the number of empty homes in each local authority in England in the last year for which figures are available. [180193]

Keith Hill: The information requested has been made available in the Library of the House.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the effect of *(a)* large scale voluntary stock transfers of council housing and *(b)* Arms Length Management Organisations on the provision of low cost housing. [180037]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has made no direct assessment since we do not expect the transfer of existing council housing to Registered Social Landlords (RSL) or its management by an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) in itself to directly affect the provision of low cost housing for key sector workers. Where a local authority receives a receipt from a housing transfer it may be used to contribute towards the provision of additional low cost housing.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what policy on investment in decent homes standards is followed by his Department for council homes where the tenants and residents have voted neither to transfer to a registered social landlord nor to establish an Arms Length Management Organisation. [180350]

Keith Hill: Stock Transfer, Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) and Private Finance Initiatives (PFI) are the only options available to local authorities and tenants to access any extra resources they need to deliver Decent Homes.

Where tenants have voted against all these options following full tenant engagement in determining the option voted on, the Government will respect that decision, but no extra funding will be provided. The resources available for investment in Decent Homes will be those currently provided through Housing Subsidy, the Major Repairs Allowance, and what the local authority chooses to make available through the single capital pot and through receipts from any other income.

India

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on his official visit to India. [180152]

Yvette Cooper: My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister will be visiting India later this month on behalf of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister. The visit is an early chance to meet Senior Members of the new Indian Government and to emphasise to them the importance of our strategic partnership with India.

Planning (Fees)

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many local authorities in England have introduced fees for pre-planning application consultation; and if he will make a statement. [179915]

Keith Hill: No central information is available on numbers of local authorities charging for pre-application advice. Councils may make such charges at the present time under their powers to charge for discretionary services in section 98 of the Local Government Act 2003. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is currently undertaking a review of the scope and level of planning fees and will be publishing a consultation document later in the summer.

Playgrounds

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment his Department has made of the impact of European standards *(a)* BS EN 1176 and *(b)* BS EN 1177 on (i) the number of playgrounds in the UK and (ii) the cost of maintaining playgrounds by local authority. [179665]

Mr. Caborn: I have been asked to reply.

This department has made no assessment of the impact of European standards BS EN 1176 and BS EN 1177 on the number of playgrounds in the UK or on the cost of maintaining those playgrounds.

Rental Property

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the Department's current estimate is of the shortage of houses for affordable rent in each London borough; and if he will make a statement. [179642]

Keith Hill: Information on the shortage of affordable houses specifically for rent in London is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. At the end of March 2004, there were 59,000 households in temporary accommodation. Projections for London's population suggest an increase of 336,000 households by 2016. The Mayor's London Plan sets an overall baseline target for the capital of 23,000 new homes per annum (in all sectors and from all sources) and an aspirational target of 30,000 homes per annum. The baseline target is broken down in the London Plan by London borough. The London Plan also has a target that 50 per cent. of new homes should be affordable.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* council and *(b)* housing association new dwellings for rent he expects to be completed in the current year in each London borough; and what his expectation is for 2005–06. [179643]

Keith Hill: The Housing Corporation estimate the following forecasted rent completions by housing associations in London local authorities in 2004–05 and 2005–06:

Local authority	*Forecasted housing association rent completions* 2004–05	2005–06
Barking and Dagenham	47	308
Barnet	50	357
Bexley	12	147
Brent	185	628
Bromley	119	138
Camden	187	189
Corporation of London	0	0
Croydon	199	268
Ealing	214	314
Enfield	217	382
Greenwich	215	301
Hackney	289	514

Local authority	Forecasted housing association rent completions 2004–05	2005–06
Hammersmith and Fulham	166	283
Haringey	284	429
Harrow	55	76
Havering	87	151
Hillingdon	118	92
Hounslow	79	247
Islington	205	683
Kensington and Chelsea	45	90
Kingston Upon Thames	170	52
Lambeth	226	621
Lewisham	495	361
Merton	83	133
Newham	256	493
Redbridge	82	103
Richmond Upon Thames	138	68
Southwark	311	459
Sutton	175	206
Tower Hamlets	154	800
Waltham Forest	83	221
Wandsworth	102	47
Westminster	132	261

In addition in their Housing Strategy Statistical Appendices returns last year, five London local authorities proposed additional affordable housing completions/acquisitions in 2004–05. These were:

Local authority	Proposed affordable housing completions/acquisition (2004–05)
Croydon	5
Enfield	2
Hillingdon	32
Southwark	100
Wandsworth	56

These data cannot be broken down for local authority new dwelling completions for rent specifically. No data are held for 2005–06.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many employees in his Department have *(a)* signed a formal opt out from and *(b)* are exempt from the Working Time Directive; and how many employees in his Department have recorded hours, including any accruing on a flexitime basis, in excess of the maximum allowed under the Working Time Directive in the last month for which figures are available. [178365]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has *(a)* 28 staff who have signed a formal opt out and *(b)* no staff that are exempt from, the Working Time Directive. Payroll records show that, in April 2004, 40 staff worked in excess of 48 hours in any given week. The Working Time Directive applies where an average of 48 hours a week has been exceeded over a period of 17 weeks.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister produces quarterly reminders of the Working Time Regulations for staff and overtime statistics are monitored on a regular basis to ensure that staff are not consistently working in excess of 48 hours per week.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Darfur (Sudan)

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what discussions *(a)* he, *(b)* members of his Department and *(c)* representatives of the UK Government in Khartoum have (i) initiated and (ii) had with (A) members and (B) representatives of the Sudanese Government concerning the facilitation of access to Darfur by non-governmental organisations; what specific complaints were raised during those discussions; and if he will make a statement. [179747]

(2) what assessment his Department has made of the UN Under Secretary-General's statement of 14 June regarding the bureaucratic burden placed on relief agencies trying to reach Darfur in Western Sudan; and if he will make a statement; [179746]

(3) how many complaints his Department has received from representatives of non-governmental organisations relating to access to Darfur in each of the last eight months; and if he will make a statement; [179748]

(4) what assessment his Department has made of the Sudanese Government's policy of removing radio equipment from non-governmental organisations' and United Nations' vehicles seeking access to Darfur; and if he will make a statement. [179632]

Hilary Benn: DFID is facing a humanitarian emergency in Darfur, where the provision of assistance is absolutely vital. In this context, hindrances to the delivery of humanitarian supplies are unacceptable. The UK has been working to facilitate humanitarian access to Darfur, and our Embassy in Khartoum is engaged on a daily basis with the Government of Sudan, although we are making progress, there is still more that needs to be done.

I raised the question of issuing visas to Sudan with the Sudanese Foreign Minister in London on 11 May. He gave me a firm commitment that visas for humanitarian personnel working in Darfur would be issued within 48 hours. There has been a marked improvement as a result of this commitment. On 20 May, the Sudanese Government announced the change to a 48 hour notification system for travel to Darfur, replacing the previous requirement for a travel permit. This improvement has also allowed progress on the ground.

I raised the question of humanitarian access with the First Vice President the Minister for Humanitarian Affairs, and the State Minister for Finance in Khartoum on 8 June, where I was given firm commitments that the Sudanese Government would fast-track customs

clearance for humanitarian goods within seven days, and that new international NGOs applying for registration to work in Darfur would be fast-tracked in 10 days. This has resulted in new international NGO registrations. They also agreed that medical supplies that were on an approved list did not need testing before being brought into Sudan. I raised with them the specific complaint from Medecins Sans Frontieres-Holland that 200MT of food and 30MT of medical supplies had been held in Port Sudan for three months. Both Ministers assured me that this would be released within days. This has now taken place.

Following my visit, the British Ambassador has continued to raise on a regular basis the question of humanitarian access to Darfur, including through letters to the Minister for Humanitarian Affairs and the State Minister in the Ministry for Humanitarian Affairs highlighting specific instances of ongoing bureaucratic difficulties. These included outstanding applications for registration from new international NGOs, the need to give 72 hours notice for passengers on UN flights, the need for clarity about the requirements for testing medical and food supplies, the urgency of releasing radio and communications equipment from customs and the need to issue promptly visas for international health staff. We are calling on the Government of Sudan to consider suspending all regulations relating to humanitarian access to Darfur for a period of three months. The Higher Committee on Darfur will meet on 24 June to discuss humanitarian access where we will raise all the outstanding issues. In addition, I intend to speak to the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs this week.

The UK Government has been in constant dialogue with UK NGOs working in Darfur since September 2003. DFID has held regular meetings with the Disasters and Emergency Committee in London on Darfur. In Khartoum, the Ambassador has taken the lead in establishing regular meetings with the Government of Sudan, NGOs and donors to discuss the question of access to Darfur. It would require disproportionate work to answer the question of how many complaints were received by NGOs in each of the last eight months.

DFID has received reports that radios and communications equipments have been held in customs by the Sudanese authorities. Given the essential nature of this equipment for ensuring the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, this is unacceptable. It was raised in the letter from the British Ambassador to the State Minister for Humanitarian Affairs. I intend to follow up closely on the implementation of all the commitments given by the Government of Sudan about humanitarian access to Darfur and will continue to raise specific instances as appropriate.

Afghanistan

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what programmes are supported by his Department to expand and strengthen civil society in Afghanistan. [177118]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID is helping to expand and strengthen civil society in Afghanistan by supporting civil society's engagement in the political process. DFID supported the development of the new constitution in 2003 (£500,000). This included an outreach programme to make the wider community aware of the purpose of the Constitution and providing a reasonable understanding of its key features. DFID are now funding Swiss Peace (£500,000) to provide civic education for the Afghan elections and supporting the development of an independent media through our contributions to the Global Conflict Prevention Pool.

The UK is funding Action Aid (£157,680) to help increase both knowledge and awareness of the rights of women and women's participation in local governance in Afghanistan. Community level women's groups are being established and small grants made available to help build the resources and confidence of women to work together to seek solutions to common problems. These activities are being supplemented and supported by training and information sharing at the provincial level and a nationwide research project looking at the role of women in local governance in Afghanistan.

DFID also funds Government led national development programmes, which are being facilitated by a range of local and international non-governmental organisations. An example is the National Solidarity Programme (£3 million in 2003–04 with additional funding planned), which is building the capacity of hundreds of village development councils across Afghanistan and providing the resources they need to identify and address their own development priorities.

DFID also supports the British Agencies in Afghanistan Group (BAAG) here in the UK. This funding helps BAAG act as an effective umbrella group for non-governmental organisations, registered in the UK and working in Afghanistan and also facilitates information sharing and access to Whitehall Departments.

Democratic Republic of Congo

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* aid in kind and *(b)* monetary aid his Department has (i) pledged and (ii) delivered to (A) the Democratic Republic of the Congo and (B) the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (1) in each year since 1997 and (2) in each month since November 2003; and if he will make a statement. [179751]

Hilary Benn: The following table shows what has been delivered to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), including as aid in kind and monetary aid, from 1997–98 to 2003–04 (latest, provisional figures).

Until the installation of the Transitional National Government in July last year, most of our assistance had been directed towards meeting the immediate humanitarian needs in DRC, as the table shows. The nature of humanitarian assistance is such that DFID did not pledge an overall amount but delivered assistance as and when it was necessary. Our overall aid framework for DRC in 2003–04 was £23 million—of which over £20 million was delivered, including £3 million as monetary aid.

DFID does not keep central monthly records of pledges or expenditures nor does it break down expenditure specifically by region within the Democratic Republic of Congo.

£000

Financial year	Monetary aid	Technical co-operation	Grants and other aid in kind	Humanitarian assistance	Total DFID expenditure
1997–98	—	48	6,056	807	6,911
1998–99	—	63	118	370	552
1999–2000	—	49	15	1,257	1,322
2000–01	—	23	38	3,036	3,096
2001–02	—	188	63	5,307	5,558
2002–03	—	1,138	83	11,650	12,871
2003–04	2,990	3,878	320	12,946	20,135
Total	2,990	5,387	6,693	35,373	50,445

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what discussions *(a)* he and *(b)* members of his Department have had with representatives of non-governmental organisations concerning the humanitarian situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo since he was made Secretary of State for International Development; what concerns were raised; and if he will make a statement; [179752]

(2) what representations his Department has received from non-governmental organisations concerning access to the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and if he will make a statement; [179753]

(3) what assessment his Department has made of the humanitarian implications of the decision by the Government of Rwanda to close its border to the Democratic Republic of Congo; and if he will make a statement; [179754]

(4) what estimate his Department has made of the numbers of refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo in *(a)* Burundi, *(b)* Rwanda, *(c)* Uganda and *(d)* other countries; how these numbers have changed over the last six months; and if he will make a statement; [179755]

(5) what assessment his Department has made of the humanitarian impact of the security situation in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo; how this assessment has changed over the last six months; and if he will make a statement; [179756]

(6) what estimate his Department has made of the number of internally displaced people in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo; how this estimate has changed over the last six months; and if he will make a statement; [179757]

(7) what plans his Department has *(a)* drawn up and *(b)* implemented to help overcome the humanitarian crisis in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo; and if he will make a statement. [179758]

Hilary Benn: DFID has regular discussions with the UN agencies and NGOs concerning the humanitarian situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Last year, DFID's humanitarian spend was £13 million; this year, a similar amount is available.

Following the recent reports of the humanitarian impact of the instability and fighting in Eastern DRC, DFID has sent a humanitarian assessment mission to Goma and Bukavu, which arrived on 22 June 2004. This mission intends to assess and respond to the growing humanitarian problem, working alongside our partner UN agencies and NGOs to assist the most vulnerable populations.

With NGOs and the UN only just getting access into the affected parts of Eastern DRC, there are no verifiable reports on the current numbers of internally displaced people or of refugees in neighbouring countries, or their present locations and requirements. The DFID humanitarian assessment mission hopes to determine both the scale of the problem, and how UK funds can best be used to alleviate this.

I will write to the hon. Member shortly with further details.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on aid the UK is sending *(a)* unilaterally and *(b)* as part of the EU to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. [179301]

Hilary Benn: For the financial year 2004–05, DFID has made available £34 million in UK bilateral assistance to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In the financial year 2003–04, UK bilateral assistance amounted to over £20 million.

For 2002–07, the UK-attributed contribution to the European Development Fund framework for the DRC is £17 million. In 2003–04, UK-attributed spend through the EU was £9 million.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many people have left employment in his Department because of *(a)* anxiety, *(b)* stress, *(c)* depression and *(d)* other mental health reasons in each year since 1997. [175676]

Hilary Benn: Given the very small numbers of staff who have been medically retired from DFID on these grounds since 1997 this information is withheld on grounds of individual confidentiality.

HIV/AIDS

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the EU are spending in 2004–05 to counter HIV/AIDS in the Russian Federation. [179951]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID's forecasted bilateral expenditure on HIV/AIDS in the Russian Federation in financial year 2004–05 is £1.83 million. The EU estimate their expenditure in 2004 will be of the order of €2 to 2.5 million.

Iraq

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development who decided upon the payments from the Development Fund for Iraq to the US Army Corps of Engineers; what it was for; who the principal contractors were; who decided who the principal contractors would be; and if he will make a statement. [179797]

Hilary Benn: Procurement and contracting under the Development Fund for Iraq (DFI) are the responsibility of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA).

The CPA has contracted the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to carry out certain emergency and essential work in Iraq, which is co-funded by the DFI and the US Government. Most of the DFI contracts, and most of the contract value, for which the USACE is responsible are in rebuilding gas and hydro-electric power plants and oil infrastructure. The principal contractors to date are: Fluor Intercontinental, Washington International, CH2MHILL, Parsons Iraqi Joint Venture and Kellogg Brown and Root.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list those who have had sole-sourced contracts funded by the Development Fund for Iraq; which contracts are of a value of $1,000,000 or more; and if he will make a statement. [179798]

Hilary Benn: A list of sole-sourced contracts funded by the Development Fund for Iraq (DFI) is not available at this time.

The International Advisory and Monitoring Board (IAMB) is currently undertaking an audit of DFI sole-sourced contracts on behalf of the international community. As a member of the Program Review Board of the DFI, the UK has been a strong advocate of international competitive tendering wherever possible.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much has been purchased under the wheat purchase programme funded by the Development Fund for Iraq; at what cost; who was contracted to supply it; what the world price for wheat was at the time of purchase; over what time scale the wheat is supplied; under which disbursement heading it is included; how it is distributed within Iraq; and if he will make a statement. [179799]

Hilary Benn: The Government of Iraq established the public food distribution system in 1990. This system of untargeted rationing has proved to be hugely costly to the Government and has undermined the country's domestic agriculture. DFID hopes to work with the Iraqi Interim Government and other donors to help reform this system, to the benefit of both Iraq's consumers and farmers, as soon as conditions allow.

The amount of wheat actually purchased by the Government each year depends on the content of the "ration basket", which is decided by the Ministry of Trade (MOT) each month, depending on domestic production and existing stocks within the country. Published MOT budget information does not show the breakdown of the costs of individual public food distribution items but it is estimated that 3.5 million metric tonnes of wheat flour is required annually for the standard ration basket. Over the 12 months since the creation of the Development Fund for Iraq (DFI), if all of Iraq's public distribution system needs had been met from imports at world prices, the cost would have been around $700 million. This is likely to be an over-estimate since there would be some domestic purchases and use of stocks.

The major suppliers of wheat to Iraq are Australia and the US.

International export prices for wheat vary greatly depending on grade and freight distances but an average figure for 2003–04 is about $200/tonne.

The MOT is responsible for purchasing grain from overseas and from domestic producers, for organising the milling contracts and the transport of the milled wheat flour to food agents.

The following process describes how the food ration is distributed:

1. The MOT announces the food basket for the month and calls forward food agents to collect the ration;
2. Food and flour agents collect the coupons from households and go to the sales centre of warehouses/mills, where they receive an invoice;
3. Food agents collect foodstuffs from the warehouses/ distribution centres;
4. Wheat flour is transported to flour/food agents, which is paid for by the MOT;
5. Households then collect the ration from the food/flour agents and pay the nominal fee.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development on what dates the Iraqi Coalition Provisional Authority Program Review Board has met; which meetings were attended by the representative of the Government of the United Kingdom; what votes were conducted at these meetings; what the result was of each vote; and how the UK representative voted on each occasion. [179801]

Hilary Benn: The Program Review Board (PRB) meets once or twice each week. Precise dates are shown on the minutes of each meeting which are published on the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) website: iraqcoalition.org/program_review_board. The UK is represented at all PRB meetings.

The PRB votes on each project proposal. The minutes do not record the vote of individual members. Proposals pass on a majority or unanimous vote.

The UK votes in a manner consistent with UNSCR 1483, which established the Development Fund for Iraq (DPI) to be "used in a transparent manner to meet the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people, for the economic reconstruction and repair of Iraq's infrastructure, for the continued disarmament of Iraq, and for the costs of Iraqi civilian administration, and for other purposes benefiting the people of Iraq". In its voting the UK aims to support the intentions of the Iraq Ministries of Finance and Planning and to promote the principles of international competitive tendering.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to his answer of 14 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 668–69W, on Iraq, if his Department will obtain a copy of the US Government Agency audits of sole-sourced contracts funded by the Development Fund for Iraq; what

provision there is for consideration of the copy audits when the Coalition Provisional Authority no longer exists; who approves contractors for expenditure proposals approved by the Development Fund for Iraq Program Review Board; and if he will make a statement. [179802]

Hilary Benn: The external audit of the Development Fund for Iraq (DFI) has been delegated by UN Security Council Resolution 1483 (2003) to the International Advisory and Monitoring Board (IAMB). The IAMB acts on behalf of the international community and has requested copies of certain US Government audit reports as part of its current work programme. The IAMB undertakes to make all its proceedings and final reports public (within 30 days of being finalised). UN Security Council Regulation 1546(2004) paragraph 24 provides for the continuation of the IAMB after the dissolution of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) and the return to Iraqi sovereignty.

The approval of contractors for expenditure proposals endorsed by the Program Review Board of the Development Fund for Iraq is undertaken by the CPA.

Morocco (Earthquake)

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the assistance his Department has offered to the Moroccan Government for the victims of the 24 February earthquake in the Rif region. [180133]

Hilary Benn: The earthquake that affected the Al-Hoceima region of Morocco on 24 February 2004 measured 6.5 degrees on the Richter scale. It claimed over 600 lives and injured nearly 1,000.

UK search and rescue teams were put on immediate stand-by but in the event were not required as the Moroccan civil authorities and Red Crescent movement, supported by some international teams, coped adequately with that phase of the relief effort. Following discussion with the Moroccan Government about priority needs, DFID sent an aircraft with 402 winterised family tents to the earthquake area. The tents were distributed to earthquake victims by the Moroccan Protection Civile, supported by two DFID staff. The cost of the relief flight and tents was approximately £155,000. The European Commission also responded to the relief effort committing approximately £650,000 of support. Including the UK share of this support, the overall UK response was around £280,000.

On 24 May 2004, the Moroccan Prime Minister, Driss Jettou, announced that the Moroccan Government have earmarked a £165 million budget to rehabilitate and develop the quake-hit north-eastern region.

Russian Federation

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many people employed by his Department have worked on harm reduction programmes *(a)* for and *(b)* in the Russian Federation. [179936]

Hilary Benn: DFID currently employs nine staff which are involved in our work on HIV/AIDS, including managing harm reduction activities, in Russia. Eight are based in the DFID—Russia office in Moscow, one in London. Five are administrators, four are advisers. Also, over the last five years DFID has employed three Consultancy Companies involving 16 individual experts on four harm reduction projects.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the impact on harm reduction programmes supported by his Department in the Russian Federation of the *(a)* 1995 Federal Law on the Prevention of Dissemination in the Russian Federation of Disease Caused by Human Immunodeficiency Virus and *(b)* the 1998 Federal Law on Narcotic Means and Psychotropic Substances. [179937]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID funded a project entitled "Building Police Support for Harm Reduction" from August 2001 to December 2003. The project was contracted to International Family Health, and its purpose was to involve the Russian police as an integral part of harm reduction strategies. One output of this work was a report by Professor William E. Butler, Professor of Comparative Law, University of London, which sought to examine and clarify a range of issues on harm reduction in Russia from a legal and judicial perspective.

This report (published by International Family Health : ISBN 0–9545761–0-1) included an assessment of the impact of these and other Russian federal laws on harm reduction programmes in Russia and concluded that the provision of harm reduction services in Russia, in particular services for injecting drug users, is consistent with Russian law. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDOC), Open Health Institute (OHI), AIDS Foundation East West (AFEW) and others, are continuing to work on the legal issues affecting harm reduction.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what account has been taken by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the European Union of Article 15 (4) of the 1993 Constitution of the Russian Federation in support for harm reduction programmes in the federation. [179938]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID has taken account of the prevailing view among Russian and international jurists that, on the whole, the Russian Federation has properly fulfilled its international legal duties under relevant international law relevant to harm reduction, including the United Nations Narcotics Conventions.

The EU is supporting HIV/AIDS projects in Russia, including information, education and communication campaigns and training for health personnel, but is not supporting the provision of targeted harm reduction services for vulnerable groups.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the HIV/Aids projects in the Russian Federation that received financial support from his Department in 2003–04. [179939]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The following HIV/AIDS projects in the Russian Federation, including projects not principally related to HIV/AIDS but which contained an HIV/AIDS component, received financial support from DFID in 2003–04:

Project title	*2003–04 spend (£)*
Open Health Institute Harm Reduction Bridging Project	1,589,483
Knowledge for Action for HIV/AIDS in the Russian Federation	645,793
United Nations Fund for International Partnerships: Comprehensive Partnership Strategies for HIV/STI Prevention among Young People in the Russian Federation	457,046
Development of a Public Health-Based Approach to the Prevention of Sexually Transmitted Diseases in Samara	75,582
Comprehensive Targeted HIV Prevention and Control Demonstration Project (Design Phase)	42,071
Building Police Support for Harm Reduction	200,519
World Health Organisation: Strengthened Cooperation between Tuberculosis and HIV Control Services in the Russian Federation	100,000
Total	3,110,494

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the harm reduction projects in the Russian Federation that received financial support from his Department in each of the last seven years. [179940]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID has provided financial support for the following projects related to harm reduction in the past seven years. The projects marked with an asterisk have supported the provision of harm reduction services to high risk groups:

Project title	*Purpose*	*Duration*	*DFID funding (£)*
Open Health Institute Harm Reduction Bridging Project*	To reduce the transmission of HIV among injecting drug users and commercial sex workers in OHI-supported harm reduction sites in the Russian Federation	July 2001-August 2004	3,500,000
Knowledge for Action for HIV/AIDS in the Russian Federation	To create the knowledge base on HIV in the Russian Federation necessary to guide effective policy and intervention	September 2002-August 2005	1,500,000
United Nations Fund for International Partnerships: Comprehensive Partnership Strategies for HIV/STI Prevention among Young People in the Russian Federation*	To reduce the incidence of HIV/STIs among young people, especially girls and young women, by ensuring the availability of and access to information, education, health services, counselling for HIV, testing and commodities required for young people to develop and exercise effective life skills	June 2002-November 2004	1,125,000
Development of a Public Health-based Approach to the Prevention of Sexually Transmitted Diseases in Samara*	To develop sustainable, high quality STI services in Samara and disseminate successful approaches at federal level	September 1998-March 2004	981,146
Prevention of HIV/AIDS among Injecting Drug Users in Sverdlovsk Oblast*	To improve and develop preventative public education programmes on HIV/AIDS, with a special focus on injecting drug use	April 1998-April 2003	775,334
UNAIDS Regional Harm Reduction Task Force: Capacity Expansion	To strengthen the capacity of the UNAIDS Regional Task Force on HIV prevention among injecting drug users in Eastern Europe	September 2000-November 2002	450,000
Comprehensive Targeted HIV Prevention and Control Demonstration Project (Design Phase)	Design phase. Planned purpose was to establish integrated programmes of targeted HIV prevention activities in two localities at a scale sufficient to control the epidemic and in order to convince policymakers that such investment is worthwhile.	October 2002-April 2003	337,787
Building Police Support for Harm Reduction	To involve the police as an integral part of harm reduction	August 2001-March 2004	489,891
Assistance to the World Bank for the Russia TB/AIDS Control Project	Technical assistance for the design of a $150 million World Bank loan on tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS control.	May 2000-April 2002	200,000
Harm Reduction Project	To reduce transmission of HIV among injecting drug users in Sverdlovsk by developing a co-ordinated harm reduction programme	December 1999-March 2001	35,949
11th International Conference on the Reduction of Drug-Related Harm: Project Planning Activities	To assist in developing a large-scale project on reducing drug related harm in Russia	April 2000-April 2001	60,081
Harm Reduction Conference, New Delhi	To provide funding for 20 Russian delegates to attend the Harm Reduction Conference in New Delhi	April 2001-October 2001	41,405

Sudan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Government of Sudan, *(b)* the UN and *(c)* non-governmental organisation on barriers preventing aid being delivered to Darfur. [179300]

Hilary Benn: DFID is facing a humanitarian emergency in Darfur, where the provision of assistance is absolutely vital. In this context, hindrances to the delivery of humanitarian supplies are unacceptable. The UK has been working to facilitate humanitarian access to Darfur and we are making progress, although there is still more that needs to be done.

I raised the question of issuing visas to Sudan with the Sudanese Foreign Minister in London on 11 May. He gave me a firm commitment that visas for humanitarian personnel working in Darfur would be issued within 48 hours. There has been a marked improvement as a result of this commitment. On 20 May, the British Ambassador met with the Sudanese Foreign Minister, following which he announced the change to a 48 hour notification system for travel to Darfur, replacing the previous requirement for a travel permit. This improvement has also allowed progress on the ground, although there have been some outstanding issues regarding local level implementation and the rules pertaining to notification of passengers on World Food Programme (WFP) flights.

I raised the question of humanitarian access with the First Vice President, in Khartoum, the Minister for Humanitarian Affairs, and the State Minister for Finance on 8 June, where I was given firm commitments that the Sudanese Government would fast-track customs clearance for humanitarian goods within seven days, and that new international NGOs applying for registration to work in Darfur would be fast-tracked in 10 days. This has resulted in new international NGO registrations. They also agreed that medical supplies that were on an approved list did not need testing before being brought into Sudan. I raised with them the specific complaint from Medecin Sans Frontieres—Holland that 200MT of food and 30MT of medical supplies had been held in Port Sudan for three months. Both Ministers assured me that this would be released within days. This has now taken place.

Following my visit, the British Ambassador wrote to the Minister for Humanitarian Affairs and the State Minister in the Ministry for Humanitarian Affairs highlighting specific instances of ongoing bureaucratic difficulties about access to Darfur faced by NGOs. These included outstanding applications for registration from new International NGOs, the need to give 72 hours notice for passengers on UN flights, the need for clarity about the requirements for testing medical and food supplies, the urgency of releasing radio and communications equipment from customs and the need to issue promptly visas for international health staff. An inter-agency technical committee on Darfur meets regularly to discuss questions of humanitarian access and is attended by the British Ambassador. The next meeting will take place on 23rd June, where all these outstanding questions will be raised. Following the outcome of that meeting, I intend to speak to the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs.

On my return from Sudan, I spoke to the UN Secretary General about the need for humanitarian access in Darfur. I have also been in correspondence with the Heads of UN agencies and have spoken to Carol Bellamy, Executive Director of UNICEF and James Morris, Executive Director of WFP about the experience of their agencies in delivering assistance in Darfur.

The UK Government has been in constant dialogue with UK NGOs working in Darfur since September 2003. We have held regular meetings with the Disasters and Emergency Committee in London on Darfur, and have been in frequent contact with the Sudanese Embassy. In Khartoum, the Ambassador has taken the lead in establishing regular meetings with the Government of Sudan, NGOs and donors to discuss the question of access to Darfur.

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the recent statements by the UN that the Sudan Government is stopping aid reaching western Darfur. [179535]

Hilary Benn: I am gravely concerned about the constraints on humanitarian assistance to Darfur. Despite some improvements to visa and travel notification procedures for Darfur announced on 20 May, NGOs and the UN are still facing bureaucratic problems with customs clearance and notification for travel on UN flights to Darfur. DFID has have been in constant dialogue with the Government of Sudan on this issue. The UK has been working to facilitate humanitarian access to Darfur and we are making progress, although there is still more that needs to be done.

I raised the question of issuing visas to Sudan with the Sudanese Foreign Minister in London on 11 May. He gave me a firm commitment that visas for humanitarian personnel working in Darfur would be issued within 48 hours. There has been a marked improvement as a result of this commitment. On 20 May, the British Ambassador met with the Sudanese Foreign Minister, following which he announced the change to a 48 hour notification system for travel to Darfur, replacing the previous requirement for a travel permit. This improvement has also allowed progress on the ground, although there have been some outstanding issues regarding local level implementation and the rules pertaining to notification of passengers on World Food Programme (WFP) flights.

I raised the question of humanitarian access with the First Vice President, In Khartoum the Minister for Humanitarian Affairs, and the State Minister for Finance on 8 June, where I was given firm commitments that the Sudanese Government would fast-track customs clearance for humanitarian goods within seven days, and that new international NGOs applying for registration to work in Darfur would be fast-tracked in ten days. This has resulted in new international NGO registrations. They also agreed that medical supplies that were on an approved list did not need testing before being brought into Sudan. I raised with them the specific complaint from Medecin Sans Frontieres-Holland that 200MT of food and 30MT of medical supplies had been

held in Port Sudan for 3 months. Both Ministers assured me that this would be released within days. This has now taken place.

Following my visit, the British Ambassador wrote to the Minister for Humanitarian Affairs and the State Minister for Humanitarian Affairs highlighting specific instances of on-going bureaucratic difficulties about access to Darfur faced by NGOs. These included outstanding applications for registration from new international NGOs, the need to give 72 hours notice for passengers on UN flights, the need for clarity about the requirements for testing medical and food supplies, the urgency of releasing radio and communications equipment from customs and the need to issue promptly visas for international health staff. An inter-agency technical committee on Darfur meets regularly to discuss questions of humanitarian access and is attended by the British Ambassador. The next meeting will take place on 23 June, where all these outstanding questions will be raised. Following the outcome of that meeting, I intend to speak to the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs.

On my return from Sudan, I spoke to the UN Secretary General about the need for humanitarian access in Darfur. I have also been in correspondence with the Heads of UN agencies and have spoken to Carol Bellamy, Executive Director of UNICEF and James Morris, Executive Director of WFP about the experience of their agencies in delivering assistance in Darfur.

The UK Government have been in constant dialogue with UK NGOs working in Darfur since September 2003. We have held regular meetings with the Disasters and Emergency Committee in London on Darfur, and have been in frequent contact with the Sudanese Embassy. In Khartoum, the Ambassador has taken the lead in establishing regular meetings with the Government of Sudan, NGOs and donors to discuss the question of access to Darfur.

Western Sahara

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what aid he is giving to the World Food Programme support to the Saharan refugee camps. [179299]

Hilary Benn: DFID's assistance to the Saharawi refugees is channelled through contributions to the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO), rather than in the form of direct DFID support. DFID believes that this collaborative approach towards funding, alongside our international partners, represents the best way of addressing the problems faced by the refugees' population.

The EC is in the process of agreeing €8 million of humanitarian aid for the Saharawi refugees living in the Tindouf region for the period of 15 months from 1 June 2004. ECHO has also supported the Saharawi refugees through similar decisions in 2003 and 2002. For the period from 1 June 2004, €6.62 million has been allocated for ensuring the stability of food supplies. The World Food Programme (WFP) is a potential partner for delivery of this assistance but this has not yet been confirmed.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Departmental Publications

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to her answer of 25 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1561W, on departmental publications, what body or organisation is responsible for producing each publication. [178923]

Ms Hewitt: The answer is in a table which has been placed in the Library.

Departmental Websites

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total cost of her Department's websites, including those of its agencies, was in the most recent year for which figures are available. [178792]

Ms Hewitt: The cost for the Department's headquarters website, www.dti.gov.uk, is included in the overall service charge paid under the IT service contract which has been in place since April 1999. There is no separation of website costs in this charge. The costs of the agency websites for the financial year 2003–04, including VAT, are:

£000

Agency	*Cost*
Companies House	245
The Patent Office	130
The Insolvency Service	53.6
The Small Business Service	275
The Employment Tribunals Service	33.5
The National Weights and Measures Laboratory	36

In addition, I am the sponsor for the cross-departmental Business.gov programme, which includes the Businesslink.gov website. The cost for the development of this major programme in 2003–04, including the former businesslink.org site which it replaced in November 2003, was £14.2 million.

Motorsports

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what assessment she has made of the effect, in the event of the loss of the British Grand Prix, on *(a)* revenues in the motorsport sector, *(b)* jobs in the motorsport sector and *(c)* outsourcing of research and development and specialist engineering projects to the UK; [177236]

(2) what assessment her Department has made of the significance of the British Grand Prix to the success of the UK motorsport cluster. [177237]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* The Motorsport Competitiveness Panel, co-chaired by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and Mr. Paul Barron, made an assessment of all factors influencing the success of the UK motorsport industry. It concluded that retention in the UK of "world-class motorsport events", including the Formula One Grand Prix, the Motorcycle Grand Prix and the Wales Rally GB was important both economically and in maintaining the public profile of the industry.

The panel's assessment of the direct economic impact in the event that the Formula One Grand Prix were to be lost to the UK was a net loss of £3.4 million income and 230 jobs. This estimate does not take into account any secondary effects on the UK motorsport industry. However, the panel concluded that such effects would be significant. UK-based teams have confirmed that the presence of world-class events and the associated marketing opportunities are important reasons for locating in the UK and the loss of any of these events would lead to a loss of business for UK motorsport companies.

The Motorsport Panel's full report was published on 11 July 2003 and is available at: http://www.autoindustry.co.uk/docs/motorsportpanelreport.pdf No additional assessment of the issues raised has been made since that time.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many motorsport companies use Business Links; and how many motorsport companies have applied for research and development tax credits. [177238]

Jacqui Smith: This information is not collected centrally hence the information requested cannot be provided except at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what initiatives her Department has undertaken to promote inward investment in the British motorsport industry. [177239]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* The Department is working as part of the Government Motorsport Unit (GMU) to attract further investment to the UK's world-leading motorsport industry. International trade and inward investment are key areas of delivery for the GMU and £2 million has been set aside to support this work over the next five years.

Initiatives that have already been undertaken, in collaboration with industry bodies, include promotion of the sector at the annual Autosport Engineering and Performance Racing Industry trade shows in the UK and USA respectively. These activities are designed to encourage overseas joint ventures and alliances by UK companies as well as inward investment. Future initiatives will be undertaken based upon industry priorities.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps her Department has taken to develop the Motorsport Valley brand for promoting *(a)* the motorsport industry and *(b)* motorsport-related tourism. [177450]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 7 June 2004]:* In common with other motorsport-related issues, the Department's activities in this area are taken forward through the Government Motorsport Unit (GMU), which includes both central Departments and regional agencies.

In 2003, the Motorsport Valley brand was used as part of a high-profile inward investment promotion by the four regions concerned (East and West Midlands, South East and East of England). These agencies put forward a united message under the Motorsport Valley banner at the Performance Racing Industry trade show in Indianapolis, USA. The promotion was well received and further plans are being taken forward with the relevant industry bodies.

The brand is also used to promote motorsport tourism through a website: www.visitmotorsportvalley.com and an associated national motorsport map. These activities aim to reach a broader audience than traditional motorsport enthusiasts. This initiative is once again being taken forward on a collaborative basis by the four regions.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 16 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 959W, on deregulation, what formal assessment her Department has made of the negative economic impact of obsolete EU regulation. [179969]

Jacqui Smith: The Department has not carried out a formal assessment of the economic impact of obsolete EU regulation. In part, this obsolete legislation consists of a number of legal acts with time-limited application (e.g. the fixing of agricultural prices in a given harvest year, or the grant of a particular time-limited status, derogation or financial support to a member state or other entity). This type of obsolete legislation would therefore not have an economic impact once it is no longer applicable. The European Commission is currently taking steps to remove such legislation,, along with other measures to secure a reliable, up-to-date and user-friendly body of EC law as described in its February 2003 Communication, "Updating and Simplifying the Community Acquis" (COM (2003) 71).

Steel

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the future of UK steel production and US tariffs on UK steel. [180060]

Jacqui Smith: The overall prospects for UK steel production look encouraging. According to the Iron and Steel Statistics Bureau, UK steel production rose by 4.9 per cent. in March 2004 and by 7.2 per cent. to reach 3.3 million tonnes for the first quarter of 2004. The UK monthly total was the second highest in over two years. World demand is strong largely as a result of the expansion of the Chinese economy. In terms of the UK steel market, the most recent CBI Business Survey shows manufacturing in a more positive light with output expected to increase over the next three months at its fastest pace since 1999.

I am pleased that following a ruling of the WTO Dispute Settlement Body, which was subsequently confirmed by an Appeal Panel, President Bush removed safeguard tariffs on steel on 4 December 2003.

Western Sahara (Oil Exploration)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the granting of a licence to Wessex Exploration to survey for oil in the occupied land of the Western Sahara; and what the status is of the UN policy towards such exploitation. [179312]

Mr. Rammell *[holding answer 18 June 2004]:* I have been asked to reply.

We regard the sovereignty of Western Sahara as undetermined pending United Nations efforts to find a solution to the dispute over the territory. We fully support the efforts of the UN Secretary-General to find a fair and lasting solution. The UN Legal Counsel gave an opinion on the signing of contracts for exploration of mineral resources in Western Sahara in 2002 (S/2002/ 161 of 12 Feb 2002). We fully support this advice.

We are aware of contracts between both the Moroccan Government and the Polisario with various international oil and gas companies. We have not been involved in these deals.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Asylum Seekers

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what policy is in place in respect of returning to Zimbabwe persons residing in Northern Ireland who have had their application for asylum refused, or who otherwise fall outside the criteria for protection under the immigration legislation;. [179996]

(2) if he will ensure that no persons seeking asylum in Northern Ireland from Zimbabwe will be returned to Zimbabwe against their will. [180011]

Mr. Browne: I refer the hon. Member to the statement made by my right hon. Friend, the Member for Stretford and Urmston (Beverley Hughes) on 23 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 263W, setting out the Government's position on the return of failed asylum seekers to Zimbabwe. This policy applies equally to Northern Ireland.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many Zimbabwean nationals are residing in Northern Ireland; how many Zimbabwean asylum seekers have been successful on their initial application for asylum; how many cases are under appeal to the Immigration Appellate Authority, the Immigration Appeal Tribunal or higher courts; and how many Zimbabwean asylum seekers who were initially refused have been subsequently successful after exhausting appeal rights. [180018]

Mr. Browne: There were 289 Zimbabwean nationals residing in Northern Ireland in 2001, based on the results of the Northern Ireland Census of 2001.

As at the end of December 2003 there were 10 Zimbabwean asylum seekers (including dependants) supported in NASS accommodation in Northern Ireland. There were no Zimbabwean asylum seekers in receipt of subsistence only support from NASS in Northern Ireland.

4,175 initial decisions were made on asylum applications from nationals of Zimbabwe in 2003, of which 870 were granted asylum, 30 were granted Exceptional Leave to Remain, Humanitarian Protection or Discretionary Leave and 3,275 were refused.

Information on the number of Zimbabwean asylum seekers' cases that are awaiting appeal outcomes is not available and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Those asylum applicants who were initially refused and have subsequently exhausted their appeal rights are not granted refugee status and therefore are not successful in their application for refugee status. It is theoretically possible that an individual submits further representations post-appeal which leads to a grant but such cases are rare. Information on such cases is not currently available and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Information in regard to asylum seekers is published in the quarterly web pages and in the annual statistical bulletin "Asylum Statistics United Kingdom", available from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate web site at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1 .html

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what practical means, with particular reference to air transport, has been arranged for failed asylum seekers to return to *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* Zimbabwe; and if he will make a statement. [174250]

Mr. Browne: We announced in February our intention to begin enforced returns to Iraq. We are working to finalise the practicalities of the enforced returns programme, which we will implement as soon as the necessary arrangements are in place.

In addition since July last year the Home Office has been facilitating, without incident, the return of small numbers of Iraqi citizens who want to return home through the International Organisation for Migration.

Zimbabwe is the only country to which, as a matter of policy we do not at present generally enforce the return of failed asylum seekers. This policy is based not on asylum or human rights reasons but on our view that in the wider context of the Government's position on Zimbabwe. It would be inappropriate to return failed asylum seekers applicable at this time.

Mr. Coleman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of successful asylum applications were made in this country in 2003; and what proportion of those were denied asylum support under section 55 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002. [179929]

Mr. Browne: Information on the UK's share of asylum applications in Europe in 2003 that resulted in grants of refugee status (including appeal outcome) is not available. In terms of applications per head of the population, the UK ranked 9th in Europe in 2003.

Information on the proportion of applications in the UK in 2003 that resulted in grants of refugee status is not yet available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. Outcomes of applications for asylum depend on the merit of individual cases, and situations in countries of origin.

The eligibility for support under section 55 was considered by the National Asylum Support Service for a total of 14,760 cases in 2003, of which 9,410 asylum seekers (excluding dependants) were notified that they were ineligible. Some applicants notified that they are ineligible for support under section 55, apply nevertheless and these are shown in the published statistics within the "Invalid" support type category.

Information on the numbers refused support under section 55 is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

An estimation of the outcomes of applications for asylum in the UK made in 2003, up to and including appeal at the IAA, will be included in the Home Office annual statistical "bulletin Asylum Statistics United Kingdom 2003". It is planned to publish the bulletin at the end of August 2004, and it will be available from the Library or on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Mr. Coleman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of asylum seekers denied support under section 55 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 in the first quarter of 2004 who claimed asylum within *(a)* one, *(b)* two, *(c)* three and *(d)* four days of their arrival in the UK. [179931]

Mr. Browne: Section 55 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 came into force on 8 January 2003, restricting the availability of NASS support to those asylum seekers who make an asylum application as soon as reasonably practicable. From 17 December 2003 my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary announced that those who could give a credible account that their asylum claim was made within three days of arrival in the United Kingdom will normally be accepted as having applied as soon as reasonably practicable.

The eligibility for support under section 55 was considered by the National Asylum Support Service for a total of 2,650 cases in the first quarter (January–March 2004). The number of asylum seekers, excluding dependants, notified that they were ineligible for NASS support under section 55 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 in the first quarter of 2004 was 890. A breakdown of this figure by the number of days taken to claim asylum after arrival in the UK is unavailable and could be produced only at disproportionate cost. Some applicants notified that they are ineligible for support under section 55 apply nevertheless and these are shown in the published statistics within the "Invalid" support type category.

Information on the number of asylum seekers supported by NASS is published in the quarterly web pages and in the annual statistical bulletin "Asylum Statistics United Kingdom", available from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will grant asylum applicants from Zimbabwe the right to work while they remain in the United Kingdom. [179998]

Mr. Browne: Generally speaking asylum seekers are not allowed to work while their application for asylum remains outstanding. There remains discretion to grant permission to work in exceptional circumstances. This discretion is exercised sparingly but might be appropriate in cases where an asylum seeker has, through no fault of their own, waited for longer than 12 months for an initial decision on their claim. It would not be appropriate to grant permission to work to asylum seekers based on their nationality.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many unsuccessful asylum applicants from Zimbabwe, residing in Northern Ireland, have exhausted all appeal rights but have not been returned to Zimbabwe. [180004]

Mr. Browne: Information on the number of asylum seekers who have exhausted their rights of appeal is not readily available and could only be obtained by examination of individual case files to obtain information on the final outcomes from each tier of the appeal process. This would incur disproportionate cost. No information on the number of unsuccessful asylum seekers awaiting removal is available, partly because some applicants may leave the United Kingdom without informing the Immigration Service.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how long on average current applicants have had to wait to receive their papers after an asylum application has been granted at *(a)* initial stage and *(b)* after appeal. [180005]

Mr. Browne: The information requested is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

The latest published statistics show that the speed of processing asylum applications continues to improve significantly. Eighty per cent. of applications (excluding withdrawals and 3rd country cases[1]) received in the period April to December 2003 had initial decisions reached and served within two months, compared with 74 per cent. of applications in 2002–03, and 61 per cent. of applications in 2001–02. This exceeded the Government's targets of 65 per cent. for 2002–03 and 60 per cent. for 2001–02, and we are on track to exceed the target of 75 per cent. for 2003–04. In 2002–03, 84 per cent. of applications had initial decisions reached and served in four months, and 87 per cent. in six months.

We are also on track to meet the target of having decisions up to and including appeal made and served on 60 per cent. of applications (excluding withdrawals and 3rd country cases[1]) in 2003–04.

Information on the timeliness of initial decisions is published quarterly on the Home Office website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1 .html.

[1] Cases which may be the responsibility of other EU member states under the Dublin Convention.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what length of time assessors allow for the scrutiny of an application for asylum. [180009]

Mr. Browne: Each asylum claim is considered on its merits and there is no specific time limit for the scrutiny of an individual claim. However, the Government target is to decide and serve 75 per cent. of new asylum applications within two months of the application date. The latest published statistics show that this target is being met. 80 per cent. of applications (excluding withdrawals and 3rd country cases[1]) received in the period April to December 2003 had initial decisions made and served within two months.

The number of older applications awaiting an initial decision is falling (18,100 at the end of March 2004) and with present levels of intake and output is on track to be cleared by the end of this year.

Information on the timeliness of initial decisions is published quarterly on the Home Office website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

[1] Cases which may be the responsibility of other EU member states under the Dublin Convention.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what criteria are used in assessing asylum applications. [180012]

Mr. Browne: Each application for asylum is considered on its individual merits to determine whether the applicant has demonstrated a well founded fear of persecution in his or her country of nationality for one of the reasons set out in the 1951 Refugee Convention. These are reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion. The specific facts of the case are taken into account, along with country information and case law relevant to the claim.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has held with *(a)* the Government of Bahrain and *(b)* governments of other states in the Gulf region concerning Somali people who had sought asylum in Britain and had been deported. [180346]

Mr. Browne: Earlier this year the Immigration and Nationality Directorate signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the United Arab Emirates immigration authorities in Dubai to use Dubai airport as a transit point to effect the return of failed asylum seekers and immigration offenders to destinations world-wide including to Somalia.

Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will place in the Library a copy of the *(a)* agenda and *(b)* minutes of the meeting of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs of 28 November 2002; [179235]

(2) who the members of the Statistics, Information and Research Committee of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs were in *(a)* 2001, *(b)* 2002 and *(c)* 2003; and what the professional background of each is; [179236]

(3) if he will place in the Library a copy of the assessment of the Statistics, Information and Research Committee of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs of the cannabis related articles of the 23 November 2002 edition of the *British Medical Journal*; [179237]

(4) if he will place in the Library copies of the *(a)* agenda and *(b)* minutes of each meeting of the Statistics, Information and Research Committee of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs in 2003; [179238]

(5) if he will place in the Library a copy of the research of the Statistics, Information and Research Committee of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs that informed the Advisory Council's final report on the reclassification of cannabis. [179255]

Caroline Flint: The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) is a statutory independent body established under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 (MDA 1971) to advise the Government on drug related issues within the UK. Two of the ACMD's subcommittees—the Technical Committee (TC) and the Statistics, Information and Research Committee (SIRC) held several joint meetings in relation to discussing the reclassification of cannabis. The TC has the broad remit of reviewing the MDA 1971 and the Misuse of Drugs Regulations. As part of this it has responsibility for advising the full Council as to the appropriate classification and scheduling of drugs. SIRC, which was dissolved on completion of the cannabis work, was responsible for monitoring and providing advice on research bearing on drug misuse in the UK and drawing attention to the full Council features which appeared most significant. Included at Annex A, is a list of all SIRC members between 2001 and 2003 with their backgrounds and the organisation which they represented. Also included is a list of all Technical Committee Members during the discussions on cannabis reclassification and their respective background and the organisations that they represented.

The ACMD's minutes and agendas are not public documents. The published report—"The Classification of Cannabis under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971", published in 2002 represents the considerations and conclusions of the TC, SIRC and the full Council on the reclassification of cannabis. This includes a list of published research material which was taken into consideration. As indicated above, SIRC was disbanded on completion of the cannabis work. However, the articles featured in the *British Medical Journal* published on 23 November 2002 were closely considered by Professor David Nutt (chair of the ACMD Technical Committee), Sir Michael Rawlins (chair of the ACMD) and Department of Health officials who were content that the advice given by full council to reclassify cannabis was not compromised by the content of the articles.

Annex A: Membership to the Statistics, Information and Research Committee 2001-03

Mrs. K. Roberts—Pharmacist

Dr. M. Donmall—Manchester University Drugs Research Unit

Dr. N. Dorn—Drugscope

Ms. V. Evans—Drugscope

Mr. P. Hayes—National Treatment Agency

Dr. M. Hickman—Department of Social Science and Medicines

Professor M. Lader—Psychopharmacology

Dr. L. King—The Forensic Science Service

Mr. M. Silver—National Criminal Intelligence Service

Richard Pates—Clinical Psychiatrist & Chair of the Advisory Panel on Substance Misuse for the Welsh Assembly

Ms. C. Clancy—Senior Lecturer (Mental Health and Addictions)

Mr. M. Frischer—Department of Medicines Management, Keele University

Ms. S. Haw—Health Education Board for Scotland

Mr. P. Stroner—Scottish Drugs Misuse Database

Professor J. Strang—Senior Lecturer, Addiction Research Unit

Ms. K. Barton—SEHD

Mr. N. Wilson—National Criminal Intelligence Service

Technical Committee Members during the discussions on the reclassification of cannabis

Professor D. Nutt—Psychopharmacology, University of Bristol

Dr. J. Duxbury—Department of Oral Medicine, University of Manchester

Dr. C. Gerada—General Practitioner

Dr. N. Gill—Public Health Laboratory Service

Ms. L. Hewitt—Project Manager, Stockwell Project

Mr. R. Howard—Drugscope

Mr. A. Hunter—The Association of British Pharmaceutical Industry

Professor R. S. Jones—Department of Anaesthesia, University of Liverpool

Dr. L. King—The Forensic Science Service

Professor O. Meth-Cohn—Chemist, University of Sunderland

Dr. D. Paterson—Consultant Psychiatrist

Professor M. D. Rawlins—Psychopharmacology, University of Newcastle

Mrs. K. Roberts—Pharmacist

Dr. S. Reuben—Liverpool Drug Dependence Clinic

Professor G. Phillips—Chemist

Dr. S. L. H. Thomas—Regional Drugs and Therapeutics Centre, Newcastle

Dr. J. Loudon—Health Department, The Scottish Executive

Dr. M. Griffin—The Forensic Science Service

Dr. E. Major—Medicines Control Agency

Mr. R. Treble—Laboratory of the Government Chemist

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research has been promoted by the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs in each of the last five years. [179259]

Caroline Flint: The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) does not actively promote any external research. It does commission its own research and also considers and references other pieces of work in the course of its research. In the last five years the ACMD has published pieces of research which include: Hidden Harm: Responding to the needs of problem drug users, The Classification of Cannabis under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and Reducing Drug Related Deaths.

Assets Recovery Agency

Mrs. Browning: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the total budget of the Assets Recovery Agency has been since January 2003; and how many staff have been employed. [179893]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 22 June 2004]:* The Assets Recovery Agency became operational on the 24 February 2003. It received a budget of £13 million in 2003–04 and £15.5 million in 2004–05. The agency employs a total of 131 staff.

Mrs. Browning: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much money has been recovered by the Assets Recovery Agency since January 2003 through civil recovery orders. [179894]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 22 June 2004]:* The Assets Recovery Agency became operational on 24 February 2003. In its first full year of operation, the agency adopted for action 59 civil recovery cases. These cases have almost £50 million of recoverable assets attributable to them. In 24 of the cases interim receiving orders or freezing orders have been obtained with a total recoverable asset value of £14.1 million.

The agency has successfully recovered £2,000 in a tax assessment case, £16,000 in a civil recovery order and obtained a confiscation order with a value of £335,000.

Mrs. Browning: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many civil recovery orders have been successfully prosecuted by the Assets Recovery Agency since January 2003. [179895]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 22 June 2004]:* The Assets Recovery Agency became operational on the 24 February 2003. In its first full year of operation the Agency adopted for action 59 civil recovery cases. A further 27 cases are being assessed for possible civil recovery action. The Agency has successfully completed one civil recovery order. The remaining cases are being taken forward.

The Agency has also obtained one criminal confiscation order and has assisted the law enforcement authorities in the investigation of 17 confiscation cases.

Body Armour

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what advice he has received regarding *(a)* the extent of injury sustained by a person wearing body armour to specification (i) HGIA and (ii) HGI when hit by standard ammunition fired by short-barrelled hand guns and *(b)* the likely period of disablement and inability to work consequent on such injury. [179781]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 21 June 2004]:* Comparing two identical shots at the same position on the same person, the injury to the person wearing the HG1A armour is likely to show more severe bruising and trauma.

It is impossible to predict the exact nature and extent of an injury as this will depend on a number of factors such as the position of the shot and the build and physical condition of the person wearing this armour.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action he has taken with or on behalf of police forces to obtain compensation for forces provided with body armour to specification HGIA instead of HGI as ordered. [179782]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 21 June 2004]:* This is a matter that the forces themselves have taken up with the manufacturer. I understand that the manufacturer has offered free upgrades to restore the armour to its original specification to all forces involved.

Cannabis

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has for a review of the effect of the reclassification of cannabis. [178505]

Caroline Flint: The Government reclassified cannabis as a Class C drug earlier this year following advice from the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs, to allow

the police to focus on Class A drugs which do the most harm. The Home Office is working closely with police forces to monitor the policing of drug offences since cannabis was reclassified and early figures are encouraging. As more robust data becomes available a more thorough assessment of the impact of reclassification will be undertaken.

Coroner's Court (North Yorkshire)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the work of the coroner's court in North Yorkshire. [163621]

Paul Goggins: There are two coroner's districts within the county of North Yorkshire. York unitary authority, which was formally within that county, has its own coroner. I recently wrote to the hon. Member about a constituency case involving the latter and have asked officials to explore issues relating to that case. I have no current plans to make a statement.

Coroners

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what role the Government have in setting limits or determining the appropriate charge to be levied by Her Majesty's Coroners upon bereaved relatives and other interested parties in payment for photocopying of documents and statements to be disclosed under Rule 37 of the Coroners Act 1988; when the level of the charge was last reviewed; and what relief is available for individuals on low incomes; [179513]

(2) if he will take into account *(a)* transparency in the inquest process and *(b)* access for those with limited means when determining the appropriate charge to be levied by Her Majesty's Coroners upon (i) bereaved relatives and (ii) other interested parties in payment for photocopying of documents and statements to be disclosed under Rule 37 of the Coroners Act 1988. [179806]

Paul Goggins: The Government prescribe the fees payable to coroners for supplying copies of inquisitions, depositions, post mortem examination reports or other documents relating to an inquest. These fees are set out in the Coroner's Records (Fees for Copies) Rules 2002 and followed discussions on the appropriate level with the Coroners Society. Coroners have powers to waive any fee in cases of hardship and have been advised that no charge can be made in respect of providing a copy of any document where an inquest has not been held.

Correspondence

David Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to reply to the letter of 4 May from the hon. Member for Walsall, North regarding a constituent, ref 5120/4. [177874]

Mr. Browne [holding answer 10 June 2004]: I wrote to my hon. Friend on 24 June 2004.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when officials at the Immigration and Nationality Directorate will reply to letters from the hon. Member for Vauxhall dated 25 March and 20 May about a constituent, reference number O165652. [178741]

Mr. Browne: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to my hon. Friend on 11 June 2004.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when officials at the Immigration and Nationality Directorate will reply to a letter from the hon. Member for Vauxhall dated 4 March about a constituent, reference number B508994. [178742]

Mr. Browne: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to my hon. Friend on 17 June.

Criminal Prosecutions (Merseyside)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* successful and *(b)* unsuccessful criminal prosecutions were brought for crimes perpetrated in each Merseyside constituency in each of the last three years; and how many criminal charges were pressed for crimes perpetrated in Crosby in each of the last three years. [177849]

Paul Goggins: Information on criminal prosecutions for crimes perpetrated in particular areas is not available; rather, the information relates to offenders prosecuted in particular areas.

Nor are statistics of defendants charged with offences collected centrally. It is also not possible to break down the court proceedings data collected centrally to constituency level (because constituencies do not coincide with petty sessional areas).

The following table, however, gives the number of defendants *(a)* convicted and *(b)* not convicted in the Merseyside police force area as a whole.

Defendants convicted and those not convicted of offences of all types at all courts in the Merseyside police force area, 2000–2002

	Defendants convicted	*Defendants not convicted*[1]
2000	40,375	15,704
2001	41,372	16,120
2002	44,126	13,240

[1] Includes defendants whose proceedings were discontinued, those discharged under Sec 6 MCA 1980, and those whose charges were withdrawn, dismissed or acquitted.

Statistics for 2003 will be published in the autumn.

Cycling

Mr. Greenway: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what advice is given by his Department to police forces in England and Wales about the enforcement of legislation which prohibits cycling on footpaths. [178309]

Caroline Flint: Chief officers of police are best placed to assess the level, nature and causes of cycling offences locally and decide the response.

Police officers will take action as appropriate against cyclists whom they see breaking the law in this way. Forces also sometimes undertake short, intensive campaigns to deal with persistent cycling offenders.

To help enforcement we have given community support officers the power to issue £30 fixed penalty notices for cycling inconsiderately or on the pavement

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will encourage pedestrians who are knocked over by cyclists on footpaths and pavements to report the incident to the police. [178776]

Caroline Flint: Cycling on the footpath is an offence under section 72 of the Highways Act 1835. The police will enforce the offence as appropriate. As with other offending we would encourage members of the public to give evidence of specific problems and of particularly dangerous behaviour to the police. This will help ensure that the police target their responses effectively.

Departmental Press Officers

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many press officers were employed in his Department in each year from 1990–91 to 2003–04; what the total cost was in each year; and if he will make a statement. [162848]

Fiona Mactaggart: Records of numbers and costs before 1996–97 have not been kept.

Press office numbers and costs for the following years are outlined as follows:

	Numbers	*Cost (£)*
1996–97	16	369,000
1997–98	13	332,000
1998–1999	13	329,000
1999–2000	16	345,000
2000–01	[1]31	863,000
2001–02	[2]35	1 million
2002–03	39	1.7 million
2003–04	39	1.9 million

[1] Expansion of the Home Office press office followed an external consultant's review of its staffing and operation in 1999 and recommended the creation of the Newsdesk so as to better meet the demands of the media. This improved efficiency from 'losing' in excess of 20 per cent. of the calls pre expansion, to a position where from June 2003 to June 2004 91.8 per cent. of the 67,070 press calls received by the Newsdesk were answered.

[2] The Home Office press office and the prison service press office merged in May 2001.

Domestic Violence

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what review has been made of his Department's definition of domestic violence as promised in the Summary of responses to Safety and Justice: The Government's proposals on domestic violence. [178815]

Paul Goggins: A review was undertaken within the context of work to address the specific needs of minority communities. The definition has been widened to incorporate violence by family members as well as between adults who are, or were, intimate partners. This was done to ensure that those issues of chief concern to BME communities, such as so-called "honour crimes" are properly reflected.

Following the review, a common Government definition of domestic violence was agreed. It follows the definition used by the Association of Chief Police Officers, and is:

"Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality."

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when his Department expects to complete its research into the links between domestic violence and substance misuse. [178821]

Caroline Flint: Research into the links between substance abuse and domestic violence has been commissioned and is being undertaken by the School of Health and Social Studies at the University of Warwick. We expect the research to be completed by the autumn.

Drug Dealers (Assets Seized)

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the total of assets seized from convicted drug dealers was in each of the last three years. [177831]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not yet available for the year 2003–04. The total of assets confiscated from convicted drug dealers in each of the previous three years is as follows:

	Amount Confiscated(£)
2000–2001	11,757,000
2001–2002	11,873,000
2002–2003	20,905,000

The total amount obtained from confiscation orders in each of these years is £19,833,000 in 2000–01; £20,609,000 in 2001–02; and £41,008,000 in 2002–03.

Drugs Misuse (Rochdale)

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what public funds were spent on tackling drugs misuse in the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale in *(a)* 1997–98 and *(b)* 2003–04; and what percentage of funding in each case was targeted at the ethnic minority community. [178500]

Caroline Flint: Breakdown of financial allocation to local constituencies is not available in the form requested as funding is allocated to drug action team (DAT) area. In this case Rochdale DAT which covers Rochdale, Oldham East and Saddleworth and Heywood and Middleton.

The period for 1997–98 is prior to the formation of the National Drug Strategy and there is no locally held information on funding available for that financial year. As a result it is not possible to provide information on the amount of funding targeted at black and ethnic minority communities at this time.

In 2003–04 the total drugs allocation for Rochdale DAT was £1,869,000. In order to ensure consistency figures supplied are based on funding streams associated with the National Drug Strategy and are readily

verifiable. These funding streams are specifically targeted at tackling the harm caused to individuals, families and communities by the misuse of drugs. Other mainstream funding is made available at a local level, this varies and both in amount and origin as a result it is not possible to provide robust financial information.

£

	2003–04
Partnership capacity	68,000
Treatment pooled budget	1,023,000
Criminal Justice Interventions Programme—capacity	178,000
Through care after care	62,000
Building safer communities[1]	297,000
Young people	241,000
Total	1,869,000

[1] Contains non drug elements

During 2003–04, there were three specific black and ethnic minority services provided in the Rochdale area.

Two were funded by the DAT, the DAFAY project and a community interactors project, in total the funding amounted to £70,000. The DAFAY project works with young black and ethnic minorities on an outreach basis, offering one-to-one and group counselling services for substance misuse problems. The community interactors project has recruited six volunteers from local black and ethnic minority communities to provide drugs awareness to young people and parents and act as a liaison point between drugs services and the community. The third service, the EDEN project, works with adult black and ethnic minorities and is funded by the National Lottery Fund.

All the services in the Rochdale area will work with black and ethnic minorities so a proportion of the total budget will be spent on black and ethnic minority communities, however this is difficult to quantify.

Drugs Misuse

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what public funds were spent on tackling drugs misuse in Stoke-on-Trent North in *(a)* 1997–98 and *(b)* 2003–04. [177619]

Caroline Flint: Breakdown of financial allocation to local constituencies is not available in the form requested as funding is allocated to Drug Action Team (DAT) area. In this case Stoke on Trent DAT which covers Stoke on Trent North, Central and South.

The period for 1997–98 is prior to the formation of the National Drug Strategy and there is no locally held information on funding available for that financial year.

In 2003–04 the total drugs allocation for Stoke on Trent DAT was £2,039,718. In order to ensure consistency figures supplied are based on funding streams associated with the National Drug Strategy and are readily verifiable. These funding streams are specifically targeted at tackling the harm caused to individuals, families and communities by the misuse of drugs. Other mainstream funding is made available at a local level, this varies and both in amount and origin as a result it is not possible to provide robust financial information.

	2003–04(£)
Partnership Capacity	70,467
Treatment Pooled Budget	1,341,800
Through Care After Care—Pump Priming	35,000
Building Safer Communities[1]	397,891
Young People	194,560
Total	2,039,718

[1] Contains non drug elements

Durham Jail

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) when he last visited Durham jail; [176660]

(2) when Durham jail was last inspected; [176662]

(3) how many governors there have been at Durham jail since 1 May 1999; [176663]

(4) what the average length of service at any one prison has been of the current governor of Durham jail; [176664]

(5) how many prisoners absconded from Durham jail in each year since 1 January 1997; [176666]

(6) how many hours of the prisoners' day at Durham jail was devoted to purposeful activity in the last year for which figures are available; [176670]

(7) how many staff at Durham jail have been on sick leave in each month since 1 May 2003. [176671]

Paul Goggins: The current Home Secretary has not visited Durham prison, however, as Minister for Correctional Services, I visited on 19 March 2004. Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons last inspected Durham male prison between 19 and 22 August 2003 and the female prison between 5 and 9 January 2004. Mike Newell, has been the governing governor of Durham prison since May 1999, prior to that he was governor of Hull prison between March 1996 and May 1999. Since January 1997 there have been no escapes or absconds from Durham. Data show that each prisoner had an average of 18 hours purposeful activity each week.

In the last 12 months the following numbers of staff have been on sick leave each month:

	Number
May 2003	89
June 2003	87
July 2003	97
August 2003	106
September 2003	100
October 2003	125
November 2003	115
December 2003	103
January 2004	118
February 2004	100
March 2004	102
April 2004	96

Entry Clearance

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will announce proposals on the entry of *(a)* priests and *(b)* imams to the UK. [180167]

Mr. Browne: We are currently consulting faith communities on a package of proposals, including modernising the arrangements governing entry to the UK by overseas Ministers of Religion. The details of the new arrangements will be announced shortly.

Everim Ciftci

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to process Mrs. Everim Ciftci's application, reference 21004974, for leave to remain in the United Kingdom. [179573]

Mr. Browne: I wrote to the hon. Member on 24 June 2004.

Forensic Science

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many crimes in Lancashire have been investigated by *(a)* the Forensic Science Services and *(b)* a private company in the last 12 months. [179518]

Ms Blears: In the year 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004, the number of crimes committed in Lancashire in which some forensic analysis was provided by either the Forensic Science Service or some other private sector organisation was as follows:

	Number
Forensic Science Service examinations	2,314
Other agencies	1,980

G8 Summit

Mr. Lyons: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Home Office will be responsible for security arrangements at the G8 Summit in 2005. [178137]

Ms Blears: Overall operational planning and co-ordination for security at the 2005 G8 Summit will be undertaken by the Chief Constable, Tayside Police. Assistance will be provided by a number of other forces and police units, as well as central Government Departments and Agencies, including the Home Office.

Green Burials

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what financial incentives exist to encourage the use of ecologically-friendly green burials involving the use of freeze-drying human remains and burying them in environmentally-friendly coffins. [178712]

Paul Goggins: The Government believe that the public should have a realistic and fair choice in the funeral arrangements for their relatives, and it does not therefore, provide financial incentives for one form of disposal over another. However, as outlined in the current consultation exercise "Burial law and policy in the 21st Century: the need for a sensitive and sustainable approach", sustainability is an important issue. We understand that the system of freeze-drying remains is still awaiting approval for use in Sweden, where the system was created. Nevertheless, the development of alternatives to the traditional choices of burial or cremation, and particularly alternatives which are more environmentally friendly, should be given careful consideration.

High Speed Pursuits

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent guidance he has issued to chief constables concerning high speed pursuits. [179226]

Caroline Flint: The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) launched in March new guidance for the management of pursuits. I welcome this.

The ACPO guidance, produced in consultation with the Police Complaints Authority (now the Independent Police Complaints Commission), is designed to help ensure that pursuits can be resolved quickly and safely for everyone involved. It will help ensure development of a coherent policy that maximises safety for all those involved. Its guidelines stress the importance of considering each pursuit individually, according to the developing circumstances, with decisions being made on the basis of the changing information available. The guidance fully recognises that there may be occasions when it is better to discontinue a pursuit on the grounds of public safety.

Work continues to ensure that the correct training is provided in the police service, that there are adequate management controls, and that robust risk assessments are in place to ensure that safety is maintained at all times.

Holloway Prison (Suicides)

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many cases of *(a)* self-harm, *(b)* suicide and *(c)* attempted suicide have been recorded at HM Prison Holloway in each of the past five years; and what discussions he has held with the governor and staff concerning these figures. [179693]

Paul Goggins: The information requested about self-inflicted deaths and self-harm is provided in the following table. Suicidal intent is not easy to establish. The reasons why people self-injure are highly complex, and it is difficult to distinguish between acts of self-harm that were attempts at ending life, and those that occurred for other reasons. It is not possible, therefore, for the Prison Service to determine from the general figures recording incidents of self-harm those acts that could be described as attempts at suicide. The figures for self-harm in the table therefore include all acts of self-harm, however serious.

	Number of self-inflicted deaths[1]	*Number of recorded incidents of self-harm*[2]
1999	2	248
2000	1	122
2001	1	542
2002	1	765
2003	0	[3]851

[1] The Prison Service employs the term "self-inflicted death" rather than suicide. This includes all those deaths where it appears the person acted intentionally to take his/her own life.
[2] The figures provided are number of incidents of self-harm, not number of individuals.

[3] In December 2002, a new form for reporting self-injury (the F213SH) was introduced across the prisons estate in England and Wales, which is known to have improved reporting practices. Please note therefore that much of the increase in reported self-harm in 2003 may result from the change in reporting procedures rather than reflect an actual increase in incidence of self-harm.

In 2004 to 16 June, there have been two apparently self-inflicted deaths at Holloway; the number of incidents of self-harm is not yet available.

My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary, visited Holloway in April 2004, and I visited the establishment in October 2003. We both had the opportunity to talk with the Governor, with a number of prison staff from a variety of disciplines, and with groups of prisoners. It was clear from our wide-ranging discussions that Holloway is dealing with a large number of vulnerable women, many of whom enter custody already struggling to cope with a wide range of difficult issues that increase their likelihood of suicide and self-harm. These include mental health, drug and alcohol problems; histories of abuse, troubled relationships and social exclusion; as well as past experiences of self-harm.

Both my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary and I were impressed with Holloway's First Night in Custody Project, which focuses on the needs of women at the vulnerable stage of entry into prison. The Project was set up in October 2000 and is run by the Prisoner Advice and Care Trust. It employs a full-time project worker and two link workers to help identify women at risk of self-harm or suicide. The project sees over 100 prisoners a month and makes referrals to services in and outside the prison on housing needs, mental health problems, drug or alcohol problems.

Holloway is also one of the three prisons currently piloting Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT), an innovative programme developed for women with 'borderline personality disorder' who also self-harm or engage in suicidal behaviours.

20 safer cells are to be installed at Holloway by October 2005. Safer cells, which are manufactured and installed to make the attachment of ligatures very difficult, have been found effective in preventing impulsive suicide attempts.

Across the prisons estate, women prisoners are to benefit from a specifically targeted and separate suicide prevention and self-harm management strategy being developed for them. This draws upon specialist knowledge of suicidal behaviour among women prisoners, and builds upon a number of interventions including: individual crisis counselling for women prisoners who self-harm; the continued development and evaluation of DBT; investment and planning to ensure progress on the detoxification strategy in women's prisons; and the introduction of a new training pack for all staff working with women in custody, which includes a module on the health and well-being of women prisoners. £1 million from the Department of Health has been allocated to women's prisons to be spent on the recruitment of psychiatric nurses.

Illegal Immigrants (Employers)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many employers have been fined for employing illegal immigrants under section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 in each year since 1997. [177843]

Mr. Browne: Information on the number of employers in the UK who were prosecuted for employing illegal immigrants is not available and therefore information on the numbers of these employers successfully prosecuted is not available.

However information on persons proceeded against for employing a person subject to immigration control under section 8 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1996, together with the penalties imposed, is shown in the table.

Information on those people proceeded against under the Immigration Acts between 1997 and 2002 was published on 27 November 2003 in the command paper "Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom 2002" (Cm 6053), a copy of which can be found in the Library of the House. Comparable statistics for 2003 will be published later this year in the command paper "Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom 2003".

Number of persons proceeded against and those found guilty of offences under section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, England and Wales 1997 to 2002

Offence description	*Statute*		*Persons*[1] *proceeded against*	*Number of offences involved*	*Persons*[1] *found guilty*	*Persons*[1] *fined*	*Persons*[1] *not separately dealt with*[2]
Employing a person subject to immigration control who has attained the age of 16	Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 section 8.	1997	—	—	—	—	—
		1998	1	1	1	—	1
		1999	4	23	1	1	—
		2000	10	32	4	4	—
		2001	5	65	1	1	—
		2002	2	22	1	1	—

[1] Principal immigration offence basis.

[2] Indicates that a substantive penalty has been imposed on a non-immigration offence dealt with at the same time.

Justice and Home Affairs Council

Mr. Connarty: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the outcome was of the Justice and Home Affairs Council held on 8 June; what the Government's stance was on the issues discussed, including its voting record; and if he will make a statement. [178898]

Caroline Flint: I represented the United Kingdom at the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) Council in Luxembourg on 8 June.

Police and Judicial co-operation

Further to the European Council Declaration on Terrorism the JHA Council noted a number of papers, including a draft report to the European Council on the implementation of previously agreed instruments; a draft Action Plan listing the actions to be taken by who within the EU and by when; and two discussion papers by the Counter Terrorism Co-ordinator, Gijs de Vries. The Council also adopted Council Conclusions noting action taken since the European Council and requesting further work.

Along with the majority of other member states I supported the report on intelligence capacities by the Secretary General Javier Solana. In addition I set out the UK's five priorities on practical Counter-terrorist co-operation. Firstly, that all member states should be able to exchange information through the Visa Information System. Secondly/that there needed to be interoperability between EU and national databases. Thirdly, that all member states should be actively involved with the European Borders Agency. Fourthly, that all member states need to include biometrics in passports and, finally, that the EU needs to find a way of taking action on security measures on ID cards.

Commissioner Vitorino then presented the Communication on the implementation of measures agreed at the Tampere Council in 1999 and highlighting the positive work done, notably on migration and counter-terrorism. Emphasising that the new College and JHA Commissioner would have their own views on the future JHA programme, Vitorino identified integration of the new member states into Schengen, and action at the EU's external border to combat illegal immigration and trafficking as important areas for future JHA action. He also saw a need for further work on common standards for criminal procedural law, on data protection and on rules on evidence in cross-border prosecutions. Finally, he identified the need for better evaluation and implementation of adopted legislation.

A minority of member states then gave initial reactions to the document and set out some of their priorities. The Netherlands indicated that they expected the June European Council to task the JHA Council with developing an appropriate response to the Commission's Communication. They therefore asked for written comments from member states and indicated that there would be further Ministerial discussion of the Communication at the July JHA Council.

The Council reached a general approach on the Framework Decision on mutual recognition of confiscation orders. The Presidency commended work done so far to prepare the future EU drugs strategy 2005–12. There was no decision on who should be the director of Europol.

Under Any Other Business Germany noted that all member states were welcome to join the recent common declaration by Germany, the Benelux countries and Austria on efforts to improve practical law enforcement co-operation. Immigration and Asylum

Following agreement, welcome to the UK, that it could be used by member states to support resettlement schemes the Council reached agreement on the Council Decision to establish the European Refugee Fund.

In addition, the Council adopted the Council Decision establishing the Visa Information System and Council Conclusions setting out the elements for establishing preparatory actions for a financial instrument for managing returns. A General Approach was reached on the Council Recommendation on facilitating the admission to the EU of scientific researchers.

The Commission presented two Communications. The first on the links between legal and illegal migration focused on economic migration, bilateral labour agreements and regularisation measures but concluded that the impact of legal migration measures on illegal immigration was impossible to quantify.

The Commission indicated that, later this year, they planned to issue a Green Paper on the extent to which the admission of economic migrants should be regulated at EU level, but noted that there was no consensus on the (Italian Presidency's) idea of an EU migration quota.

The second communication on the entry to the EU of people in need of international protection focused on enhancing protection capacity in the regions of origin and resettlement in the EU.

I welcomed the Communication and made clear that although our earlier proposals on zones of protection had been a useful contribution to the debate, our thinking had moved on and we were no longer pushing them. Two other member states intervened: one to support the communication and the second to oppose. The Presidency therefore concluded that there would be further debate at the July JHA Council.

During the Mixed Committee the Presidency sought views on whether the draft Regulation on standards for security features and biometrics in passports should require one or two mandatory biometric identifiers, and whether the second identifier—be it mandatory or optional—should be fingerprints. I pointed out that the UK is currently running trials of the different technologies and that it would be better to wait for the results before deciding what the second identifier should be. Although two other member states supported me, a majority supported fingerprints as a second indicator although there was no consensus as to whether this should be mandatory. The Presidency concluded that further work should proceed on the basis of one mandatory biometric identifier, the facial image, and a second optional indicator, namely fingerprints.

In the margins of the Council Ministers agreed an intergovernmental resolution calling for certain linguistic changes to be made to member states' passports to take account of EU enlargement and calling on the new member states to start issuing EU formatted passports from 1 January 2007.

Finally, the list of A points as in 10120/04 PTS A 28 was adopted. A copy has been placed in the Library.

Metropolitan Police

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the crime clear-up rates in the Metropolitan Police Force area were in each of the last six years, broken down by London borough. [177181]

Ms Blears: Clear up rates in the Metropolitan Police Force area are as set out in the following table.

Percentage

	1998–1999	*1999–2000*	*2000–2001*	*2001–2002*	*2002–2003*	*2003–2004*
Barking and Dagenham	19.1	14.3	13.3	13.5	17.6	16.8
Barnet	22.2	16.1	17.3	16.6	13.3	13.6
Bexley	17.4	13.7	12.6	12.5	14.8	15.3
Brent	20.6	13.1	12.4	13.9	12.1	14.5
Bromley	20.3	14.0	12.9	13.4	14.1	16.5
Camden	23.3	16.4	14.4	12.2	13.5	16.6
Croydon	21.8	16.1	16.5	13.8	14.3	14.7
Ealing	23.1	17.5	15.5	16.4	17.3	15.8
Enfield	21.6	13.0	15.1	13.1	15.4	14.5
Greenwich	23.0	19.5	19.4	16.4	13.9	13.2
Hackney	22.5	15.0	13.8	14.9	14.8	13.3
Hammersmith and Fulham	21.0	15.0	14.0	14.8	13.7	16.3
Haringey	22.0	22.2	23.0	19.2	22.5	20.4
Harrow	26.3	18.0	17.1	14.3	14.2	14.5
Havering	24.2	17.7	14.5	15.1	16.3	16.3
Heathrow Airport	35.4	27.6	29.9	26.8	25.5	26.4
Hillingdon	16.8	11.9	11.8	11.9	13.1	15.0
Hounslow	18.3	13.5	14.0	13.2	13.8	15.1
Islington	21 2	14.8	16.4	14.5	12.1	15.2
Kensington and Chelsea	21.6	13.2	13.3	15.6	17.3	17.1
Kingston upon Thames	27.0	20.8	18.0	17.2	14.8	14.1
Lambeth	18.2	12.8	10.9	9.0	11.6	15.5
Lewisham	20.9	19.0	19.5	17.7	16.9	16.5
Merton	18.5	15.8	14.4	13.8	11.9	17.3
Newham	18.5	13.9	13.8	14.0	13.9	13.8
Redbridge	19.5	12.3	11.7	10.3	11.2	14.3
Richmond upon Thames	15.7	14.0	13.8	14.5	14.9	13.5
Southwark	25.7	18.5	15.0	13.3	12.6	13.1
Sutton	26.1	19.8	19.0	16.1	16.1	15.2
Tower Hamlets	22.9	16.5	13.9	12.6	11.8	11.8
Waltham Forest	24.0	19.2	17.3	13.3	13.3	13.7
Wandsworth	15.2	12.9	12.0	12.5	17.1	15.8
Westminster	22.9	16.5	14.5	13.8	14.3	17.6

Neighbourhood Watch

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department who would be responsible, in the event of the closure of the National Neighbourhood Watch Association, for running a national support network for the Neighbourhood Watch movement; and if he will make a statement. [178572]

Ms Blears: The Home Office has made contingency arrangements for the Crime Reduction Centre to provide website and telephone advice in the event of the National Neighbourhood Watch Association's closure.

In the longer term, all the stakeholders that make up the Neighbourhood Watch partnership: the Police, community safety departments in local authorities and the many members of Neighbourhood Watch schemes should have a say in how any future support network should be run.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what arrangements are planned for the data used by local neighbourhood watch associations held by the National Neighbourhood Watch Association (NNWA) in the event that the NNWA is dissolved. [179349]

Ms Blears: The Home Office has not had any discussions with the National Neighbourhood Watch Association (NNWA) about any data it holds.

No arrangements are planned, but the Home Office is willing to discuss this matter with NNWA or neighbourhood watch associations.

North London Mosque

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 12 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 351W, on North London Mosque, what arrangements were in place to ensure that accurate translation of the preaching delivered was obtained. [178692]

Caroline Flint: The Commissioner for the Metropolis reports that the preaching outside the North London Mosque is generally conducted in English. However, arrangements are in place to translate material collected by police evidence gathering teams.

Operation Hartley (South-West)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on Operation Hartley on the bearing down on illegal raves and festivals in the south west; and what action has so far taken place, including the number of arrests. [177956]

Caroline Flint: Avon and Somerset police inform me that Operation Hartley is an initiative operating across Avon and Somerset, Wiltshire, Dorset, Gloucestershire and Devon and Cornwall police forces areas. It is designed to proactively target organisers of illegal raves and music festivals and to provide a rapid and co-ordinated response to illegal raves. The aim of the operation is, where possible, to prevent illegal raves taking place thereby minimising disruption and nuisance caused to local communities.

It involves a combined intelligence gathering initiative and an agreed protocol to allow the pooling of police resources, where appropriate, to ensure rapid and effective enforcement action. The number of arrests already made is not yet available.

Overseas Doctors

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will grant overseas doctors in training working in the NHS permit-free postgraduate training status for a minimum period of one year, or for the duration of their post, whichever is longer. [179810]

Mr. Browne: Overseas doctors applying to carry out postgraduate training in the United Kingdom are already granted leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom for the duration of their post or the duration recommended by the Postgraduate Dean, up to a maximum of 12 months or three years depending on whether they are eligible for provisional or full registration with the General Medical Council. It would then be open to them to apply for further leave, up to the maximum permitted in the Immigration Rules.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the question of the hon. Member for Woking, reference 177009. [179499]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 18 June 2004]:* I replied to the hon. Member on 22 June 2004, *Official Report*, column, 1380W.

Police

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers were assaulted while on duty in Lincolnshire in each year since 1997. [179433]

Ms Blears: The available information relates to recorded offences of assault on a constable and is given in the table. Statistics are not available prior to 1998–99.

Recorded offences of assault on a constable in Lincolnshire

	Number
1998–99	268
1999–2000	223
2000–01	178
2001–02	218
2002–03	281

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the reasons are for the proposals *(a)* to remove the requirement for an inspector to be in charge of searches under code B of the Police and Criminal Evidence codes and *(b)* to remove the requirement for the arresting officer presence to justify arrest or detention under code C of the codes. [177778]

Ms Blears: The information is as follows:

(a) In the August 2004 edition of the Codes it is proposed to remove the legislative requirement for an officer of Inspector rank to be in charge of searches under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, Schedule 1 or the Terrorism Act 2000, Schedule 5. This change will provide consistency with other parts of the Codes whereby the officer in charge of the search is the senior officer present (See Code B, 2F). Searches in the categories specified will not always require supervision by an officer of Inspector rank and judgements about the necessary level of supervision need to be made in each individual case.

(b) It is proposed that the following paragraph be inserted into Code C, paragraph 3.4: "If the arresting officer is not physically present when the detainee is brought to a police station, the arresting officer's account must be made available to the custody officer remotely or by a third party on the arresting officer's behalf".

This new provision will enable officers to remain on front-line duties without being taken "off the street" to travel to and from the police station. It will also enable greater use of designated detention officers under sections 38 and 39 of the Police Reform Act 2002. The Code does not currently require the arresting officer to be present at the point at which the suspect is brought before the custody officer.

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what the number of day visitors used in the calculation of the Police Grant (England and Wales) 2004–05 for Avon and Somerset constabulary was; [179314]

(2) how many day visitors to Bristol Airport are counted in the number used for the purposes of calculating the Police Grant (England and Wales) 2004–05 for Avon and Somerset constabulary. [179315]

Ms Blears: The annual number of day visitors used in calculation of Police Grant 2004–05 for Avon and Somerset was 38,515,000. This number includes visitors to Bristol airport, but figures are not routinely held at levels of geographical detail below that of the police authority.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how police numbers in Crosby have changed in each year since 1997. [177947]

Ms Blears: I refer my hon. Friend to my reply of 10 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1588W. This remains the latest data available. I do not expect information on Basic Command Unit strength for 31 March 2004 to be available for publication until the autumn.

Prisons

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what audit of privately designed, constructed, managed and financed prisons run under private finance initiatives has been carried out in the last two years. [179149]

Paul Goggins: The National Audit Office carried out a review of privately designed, constructed, managed and financed prisons and published their findings in "The Operational Performance of PFI Prisons" (Ref.: HC 700 2002–2003, ISBN 0102921725).

The Prison Service Standards Audit Unit audit every privately operated prison against agreed prison and security standards on a two year rolling programme.

Private prisons are overseen by Home Office Controllers who undertake regular internal audit programmes.

Each of the private prison operators have there own quality assurance team that completes audits and reviews of the prison regime and its security procedures.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the future of *(a)* Garth and *(b)* Wymott Prisons in Chorley; and whether these prisons will remain in-house. [179517]

Paul Goggins: There are no current plans to change the role or status of either of these establishments.

Probation Programmes

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research he has evaluated on the completion rates on probation-accredited programmes where case management and programme work is integrated. [178798]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 21 June 2004]:* The Home Office's Research, Development and Statistics Directorate (RDS) has evaluated one study that looked at the relationship between case management and accredited programme completion in the Probation Service. The research was conducted by Oxford University and it was managed and published by the National Probation Directorate in 2004. The published findings "Think First in the community: attendance, attrition and outcomes for participants" are available on the National Probation Service website (www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk)

The research found that completion of the Think First programme was better when case management involved intense supervision before the start of the programme, frequent contact after completion, support with personal problems and help in using what had been learnt.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether approval for enhanced community punishment accredited programmes was given on the basis that case management and programme work were integrated. [178800]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 21 June 2004]:* Enhanced Community Punishment (ECP) was provisionally accredited by the Correctional Services Accreditation Panel and rolled out throughout England and Wales in October 2003. All Community Punishment Orders are now delivered in the form of Enhanced Community Punishment. The order requires an offender to do unpaid work while maximising the scope for learning in order to change the offender's behaviour.

Integrated case management is a key feature of ECP. It requires there to be structured communication between the people involved in delivering the different components of an order. This structured liaison and integration has been approved by the Accreditation Panel.

Road Fund Licence

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether constabularies in England and Wales have the authority to instigate prosecution against foreign nationals who are driving vehicles registered in another EU country that do not have a current road fund licence. [178948]

Caroline Flint: Foreign registered vehicles which are brought into the UK temporarily by overseas residents are usually exempt from UK licensing and registration.

As regards vehicles registered within the European Union, this exemption stems from Directive 83/182. This provides that a visitor may use a vehicle which is registered and fully tax paid in its home member state for up to six months in 12, without being subject to the domestic registration and taxation requirements of the host state.

To qualify for the exemption, visitors must have their normal residence outside the host state. It falls to vehicle keepers to satisfy the police or other enforcement authority that they are entitled to exemption from UK registration and licensing. Should they fail to do so, the normal prosecution process will follow.

Secure Training Centres

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many times restraint has been used on children in each of the secure training centres in each of the last five years. [176784]

Paul Goggins: The table shows how many times restraint has been used in each secure training centre. The figures given cover the period since the centre opened, with the exception of Medway (which opened in September 1998), where data is available from January 2000. Hassockfield opened in September 1999 and Rainsbrook in July 1999.

	1999	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Medway	n/a	703	845	814	1611	702
Hassockfield	220	694	820	825	922	341
Rainsbrook	286	582	465	822	756	185

Only certified custody officers who have completed a course of instruction delivered by approved trainers may take part in restraints in Secure Training Centres. They are required to attend regular refresher courses to maintain their certification.

Somalia

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the rule 39 order made by the European Court of Human Rights to suspend removals from the Netherlands to Somalia pending determination of a challenge to such removals in application 15243/04; and if he will review his decision to commence removals of failed asylum seekers to Somalia. [179910]

Mr. Browne: The interim order made by the European Court of Human Rights to the Dutch Government under rule 39 applied only to the applicant in that specific case. The interim order means that the applicant cannot be removed to Somalia before the European Court of Human Rights has given a decision on the applicant's case.

As with applications from all nationalities, each asylum (and human rights) claim made by someone from Somalia is considered by the Home Office on its individual merits, in accordance with our obligations under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Individual asylum seekers found by both the Home Office and the Independent Appellate Authority, not to be at risk of persecution and not in need of humanitarian protection are considered for removal on a case-by-case basis. The Home Office will not return vulnerable groups and will only enforce the return of those Somalis it is satisfied are not in need of protection.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what reports he has received regarding the fate of Maxamed Yahye Ahmed following his removal to Mogadishu by the Danish authorities. [179912]

Mr. Browne: The Danish Immigration Service has informed us that Maxamed Yalye Ahmed was returned voluntarily to Yemen by the Danish authorities. It is not known whether he subsequently chose to travel to Somalia.

Special Branch

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many Special Branch officers were employed in each of the last five years, broken down by police force area. [177174]

Ms Blears: Published information on police strength by Police Force area is available for rank, gender and ethnicity but not function.

Figures on police strength are published in Home Office statistical bulletins, copies of which can be found in the Library or on the internet site www.homeoffice.gov.uk.

The latest published data on settlement in the United Kingdom are published in the Command Paper "Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom 2002" (Cm6053), available from the Library and from the Home Office website http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/hobpubs1.html The 2003 edition is due to be published later this year.

UK Passport Service Pilot Project

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reasons the UK Passport Service pilot project was postponed; whether an independent assessment of the project's results will be carried out; and what criteria will be used when assessing the project's results. [177926]

Mr. Browne: The start of the biometric enrolment trial was delayed by two months; it went live in April 2004. The delay was caused by the need to correct initial problems and then retest the equipment. The trial is now fully rolled out and functioning at its four fixed sites and is expected to run for around six months when United Kingdom Passport Service (UKPS) will have enrolled 10,000 people.

A mobile enrolment unit will also be deployed from the end of June.

UKPS has retained the services of an expert in the field of biometrics from the National Physical Laboratory as its independent assessor of the progress and outcomes of the trial.

The trial is testing the practical aspects of recording of biometrics and public reactions to the enrolment process. The results will be used to inform future designs of UKPS systems and processes

UK Settlement

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been admitted to the UK as *(a)* husbands and *(b)* wives in each year since 1979, broken down by country of origin. [177092]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 8 June 2004]*: The latest available data relating to the number of passengers admitted to the UK as a husband or wife are shown in the following tables. The information available is broken down by the applicant's nationality, not the country of origin.

To provide data for the entire period requested would incur disproportionate cost.

A copy of the table has been placed in the House Library.

Historical data on immigration control can be found in the Command Papers "Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom", copies of which are available from the Library of the House.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Immigration Appeals

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many appeals were determined by *(a)* the Immigration Appellate Authority and *(b)* the Immigration Appeals Tribunal in each year since 1997; and at what cost. [180113]

Mr. Lammy: Information requested relating to the total number of appeal disposals, and the joint operational running costs, for the Immigration Adjudicators, and the Immigration Appeal Tribunal (IAT), is provided in the following table:

Financial year	*IAA Adjudicator appeal disposals*	*IAT appeal disposal*	*Operational running cost (£ million)*
1997–98	35,486	2,435	12.6
1998–99	39,743	1,900	14.0
1999–2000	24,440	3,176	16.1
2000–01	34,226	3,118	35.4
2001–02	61,816	4,396	51.2
2002–03	92,941	7,189	92.9
2003–04	110,223	11,171	90.2

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Sanctions

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what evaluation his Department has made of the effect of benefit sanctions. [177545]

Mr. Pond: I refer the hon. Member to the written statement I gave on 5 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 44WS.

Community Service Orders

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have lost benefit as a result of breaching their community service orders; and what the average loss of benefit has been, broken down by claimants of *(a)* income support, *(b)* jobseeker's allowance and *(c)* training allowances. [177537]

Mr. Pond: In the period 15 October 2001 to 15 May 2004, 1,789 individuals have been sanctioned as a result of the court finding them in breach of their community order.

1,007 offenders have received a 100 per cent. sanction on jobseeker's allowance with an estimated average weekly loss of benefit at 20 February 2004 of £31.17 per person.

743 people have received a sanction on income support with a 40 per cent. reduction and 39 have received a sanction on income support with a 20 per cent. reduction. The average weekly loss of benefit for the IS claimants at 20 February 2004 was £17.31 per person.

None of these claimants were in receipt of training allowance.

Notes:

1. The figures presented regarding loss of benefit in monetary terms have been estimated using information from the Departmental Central Index (DCI). It is not possible to determine the actual reduction in all cases.

2. The average loss of benefit should therefore be used as a guide to loss of benefit for individual offenders only.

Source:

Information Centre—IAD, DWP

Lone Parents (Benefits)

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many lone parents are in receipt of income support; and how many of these lone parents are also in receipt of a disability benefit in respect of *(a)* themselves and *(b)* their children. [178862]

Mr. Pond: At November 2003, there were 934,400 single parents in receipt of income support; of these, 62,200 also received disability living allowance (DLA) to help with the extra costs associated with their disability, and 60,900 received DLA in respect of a child's disability.

Notes:

1. Figures are based on a 5 per cent. sample and are therefore subject to sampling variation.

2. Figures have been rounded to the nearest hundred and quoted in thousands.

3. A single parent is defined as a single person aged under 60 with dependants aged 0–18.

4. DLA includes both DLA care and mobility.

Source:

IAD Information Centre, 5 per cent. sample Client Group Analysis.

Sure Start Maternity Grant

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many mothers in the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale have taken up the Sure Start maternity grant; and what percentage of those were of Asian origin. [178535]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested, the available information in the tables.

Sure Start maternity grants for West Pennine social fund district

	Applications	*Awards*
2000–01	1,807	1,591
2001–02	2,363	1,794
2002 (to December)	2,213	1,689

Sure Start maternity grants for area covered by Oldham and Rochdale jobcentre plus district

	Applications	*Awards*
2003 (January)	Not available	325
2003 (February and March)	682	435
2003–04	4,251	3,059
2004 (April and May)	653	494

Notes:

1. Data is not available by parliamentary constituency.

2. Rochdale parliamentary constituency used to be part of West Pennine Social Fund District and is now part of Oldham and Rochdale Jobcentre Plus District. The latter was formed in January 2003 from part of Oldham Social Fund District and part of West Pennine Social Fund District. The two areas for which data is given above are different and the data is not comparable.

3. Sure Start Maternity Grants were introduced on 27 March 2000. The very small number of cases for 1999–2000 have been excluded for data protection reasons.

4. Data is given for all applications and awards, irrespective of whether the application was made by the mother or her partner.

5. Data is not collected on the ethnic origin of Sure Start Maternity Grant applicants.

Source:

DWP Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

British Indian Ocean Territories

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what income of the British Indian Ocean Territories is disbursed *(a)* as administrative costs, *(b)* to support the security of US facilities on Diego Garcia and *(c)* to support the welfare of the Chagos Islanders. [180347]

Mr. Rammell: The revenues of the Government of the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) are disbursed on the protection and management of the BIOT Fisheries (Conservation and Management) Zone, and the BIOT civil administration. There are no disbursements to support the security of the US Defence Facility or to support the welfare of members of the Chagossian communities in Mauritius, Seychelles and elsewhere.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the recognised population of the British Indian Ocean Territories is; and what information he holds on where they are domiciled. [180348]

Mr. Rammell: There is currently no settled population in the British Indian Ocean Territory. There are no official figures for the number of persons outside the Territory who could be regarded as Chagossians either by virtue of birth there or immediate descent from a person born there. The majority of them reside in Mauritius but there are smaller numbers in Seychelles and elsewhere, e.g. in the United Kingdom.

Burma

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make representations to the Burmese Government, citing Common Article 3 of the Geneva conventions, on its treatment of the civilian populations of the Karen, Karenni and Shan peoples. [180020]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We regularly raise our concerns on human rights in Burma with the Burmese regime including the suffering of ethnic groups such as Karen, Karenni and Shan peoples, most recently when I met the Burmese Ambassador on 1 June.

We look to the Burmese authorities to respect and abide by the principles of international law, including international humanitarian law, and notably all the provisions of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, to which Burma is a State Party.

The UK co-sponsored a resolution which was unanimously adopted at the UN Commission on Human Rights on 21 April that condemned human rights violations suffered by ethnic groups in Burma. The Resolution called on the regime to consider as a matter of high priority becoming party to the Additional Protocols of 8 June 1977 to the Geneva Conventions, of 12 August 1949.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will recognise as genocide the actions of the Burmese Government against the Karen, Karenni and Shan peoples. [180021]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Government are one of the strongest critics of the Burmese regime's violations of human rights. There is a consistent pattern of serious violations over many years, particularly against the ethnic groups. However, the term "genocide" has a specific meaning under international law. The United Nations Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Burma, Professor Sergio Pinheiro, who has visited Burma several times does not use the term to describe the situation there nor do major international NGOs, who monitor the situation in the country.

Chagos Islands

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs under what circumstances civilians are allowed to visit the Chagos Islands; and if he will make a statement. [180349]

Mr. Rammell: Under the 1976 United Kingdom/United States Exchange of Notes concerning the US Defence Facility on Diego Garcia, access to Diego Garcia is in general restricted to members of the Forces of the United Kingdom and of the United States, the Commissioner and public officers in the service of the British Indian Ocean Territory, representatives of the Government of the United Kingdom and of the United States and, subject to normal immigration requirements, contractor personnel. The United Kingdom Government reserves the right, after consultation with the appropriate United States administrative authorities, to grant access to members of scientific parties wishing to carry out research on Diego Garcia and its environs, provided that such research does not unreasonably interfere with the activities of the facility. Access is not to be granted to any other person without prior consultation between the appropriate administrative authorities of the two Governments.

Under the immigration law of the British Indian Ocean Territory, all persons other than members of the United Kingdom or United States armed forces and Government officials require a permit to visit any part of the Territory, including both Diego Garcia and the outer islands. Such permits are not generally granted except in connection with official business or on compassionate grounds. However, private yachts are allowed to call in at the outer islands without a permit provided that the crews do not stay ashore overnight.

Civil Service Relocation

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many civil servants and what percentage of the total Civil Service workforce in his Department will be relocated over the next five years *(a)* outside the M25, *(b)* to the West Midlands and *(c)* to Staffordshire. [180177]

Mr. Rammell: Detailed Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) relocation plans were set out in the Lyons report, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House. 456 staff will relocate to the FCO Milton Keynes site over the next five years, which represents 12 per cent. of FCO central London staffing levels.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he will reply

to the letter to him dated 6 May from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mohammed Shafi. [178944]

Mr. Mullin: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary replied on 15 June.

Death Certificates

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what charges his Department makes for issuing death certificates for individuals who die abroad; what plans he has to review these charges; and if he will make a statement. [179570]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: There is no requirement under UK law for the death of a British national overseas to be recorded at one of our Posts. In many cases, the local authorities for the jurisdiction in which the death took place issue death certificates.

However, if we are asked to do so the Statutory fee for registering a death at one of our Posts is £55 for the registration only. A copy of the entry costs an additional £35 per copy, if obtained through the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and £8 per copy if obtained through the General Registry Office in Southport, Merseyside, after March of the succeeding year.

It is established Government policy that the cost of consular services, which are laid before Parliament, should be set to cover the full costs involved in delivering the services and not subsidised by the taxpayer.

There are no plans to review the costs at present.

Honours List

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list those individuals who are not UK citizens who since 1 May 1997 have been awarded honours, giving in each case *(a)* the date of the announcement, *(b)* the honour in question and *(c)* the rationale behind the honour. [180397]

Mr. Straw: During this period, approximately 700 honorary awards have been bestowed on foreign nationals who reside in the United Kingdom and overseas. Since honorary awards are not published in the New Year and Birthday lists, but are processed throughout the year, details are not readily available. Honorary awards are not necessarily announced since not all recipients desire publicity. Honours are awarded for services to British interests.

To provide the detailed information requested would incur disproportionate costs.

Indian Foreign Minister

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on his meeting with the Indian Foreign Minister. [179905]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary met the Indian Foreign Minister Mr. Natwar Singh on 16 June. This was the first Cabinet-level meeting between our two governments since the Indian General Election in April/May. The Foreign Secretary and Mr. Singh recognised the strength of our bilateral relations and emphasised their desire to enhance our engagement yet further. They also discussed a range of regional and global issues including: India/Pakistan relations, Iraq, Afghanistan, Nepal and South Asian regional co-operation.

OSCE Conference

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what conclusions were reached at the OSCE conference on racism and anti-semitism on 16–17 June in Paris; what practical steps he expects to be taken following the conference, with particular reference to the internet; and if he will make a statement. [180351]

Mr. Rammell: The OSCE Meeting on the Relationship between Racist, Xenophobic and anti-Semitic Propaganda on the Internet and Hate Crimes looked at a variety of methods to address this issue including monitoring, self-regulation, legislation, and raising awareness in the community and among young people. The views of participating states varied widely, particularly over the balance to be struck between freedom of expression and combating hate speech. We expect the final report of the conference to issue within a month. The report will be discussed at the OSCE's Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in October, along with the reports of the Anti-Semitism Conference held in Berlin in April and the Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination Conference held in Brussels in September. OSCE participating states are then likely to reach a decision on political commitments on tolerance at the Ministerial meeting due to be held in Sofia in December.

Rwanda/Congo

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions *(a)* he, *(b)* members of his Department and *(c)* representatives of the Government have had with (i) members and representatives of the Government of Rwanda and (ii) representatives of non-governmental organisations regarding the closing of the border between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo; and if he will make a statement. [179640]

Mr. Mullin: My right hon. Friends the Foreign Secretary and the Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn) have both spoken to President Kagame of Rwanda to express our concern over present tensions between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and to press for a peaceful solution to the crisis. I will be visiting both Rwanda and the DRC during the week commencing 21 June to reiterate these concerns. I hope to meet President Kabila and Kagame during this visit.

Our Ambassadors in Kigali and Kinshasa remain in regular contact with their host Governments, and with NGO representatives, on the situation on and around the Rwanda/DRC border.

Sudan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he

will be making to the Sudanese authorities concerning the seizure on 20 May of the guesthouse in Khartoum belonging to the Episcopal Church in Sudan. [179344]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Our Embassy in Khartoum is in contact with the Christian Community about this case and have raised the matter with the Government of Sudan. The Episcopal Church in Sudan (ECS) requested a review of the court eviction order by the original judge and this has been accepted. The judge has also issued an injunction, as requested by the ECS, that nothing should be done to the guesthouse property while the court case is under way.

Vietnam

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he will be making to the Government of Vietnam concerning the arrest of Rev. Nguyen Hong Quang in Ho Chi Minh City on 8 June. [180139]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We are working with our EU colleagues in Vietnam to establish the circumstances surrounding the reported arrest on 8 June of Pastor Quang and to determine whether he should be added to the EU list of prisoners/detainees of concern whose cases are regularly raised with the Vietnamese authorities. A copy of this list was handed over to the Vietnamese during the EU-Vietnam Human Rights Dialogue meeting on 22 June, attended by the British Ambassador to Vietnam.

TRANSPORT

Motability Scheme

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many cars receive road tax exemption through the Motability scheme; how much this exemption costs; what the financial value is of the exemption; how many of the exempted cars are registered to people aged 65 years and over; what plans he has to extend the exemptions to adapted cars bought by people disabled after their 65 birthday; and if he will estimate the cost of extending the exemptions. [178459]

Mr. Jamieson: This exemption cost the Exchequer an estimated £155 million in 2002–2003. It can be worth anything between £15 and £2,585 per annum depending on the type of vehicle concerned.

There are currently around 375,000 vehicles in the Motability fleet (either contract hire or hire purchase). About 26 per cent. of these are in the 65+ age group.

There are no plans to change the way the exemption works at present. However, the Chancellor keeps all taxation policy under review and any changes are announced in the context of his Budget statement after considering relevant economic, social and environmental factors.

Air Transport White Paper

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the Sustainable Development Commission's report on the Air Transport White Paper. [180215]

Mr. McNulty: "The Future of Air Transport" White Paper sets out a balanced and measured approach between travel needs, economic benefits of new capacity, and the environmental effects of flying. More does need to be done to limit the environmental impacts of air travel. We recognise the importance of tackling climate change, and welcome the Commission's support for our approach to aviation participation in emissions trading. We are open to dialogue with the Commission, along with other stakeholders, as we work to deliver the White Paper.

Crossrail

John Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the relative *(a)* cost-effectiveness, *(b)* value for money and *(c)* regeneration effect of the building of Crossrail with and without the Canary Wharf link to Abbey Wood via The Royals; when he expects to make a decision; and if he will make a statement. [179874]

Mr. McNulty: Such issues were all considered by the review chaired by Adrian Montague into the current Crossrail proposals. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport, is currently considering Adrian Montague's detailed advice and will publish his findings in due course.

Emergency Vehicles (Speeding)

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much money has been spent, broken down by local authority, in dealing with speeding tickets issued to *(a)* fire service vehicles and *(b)* police vehicles. [177079]

Ms Blears: I have been asked to reply.

Information is not collected centrally on moneys spent in dealing with speeding tickets issued to fire service or police vehicles, nor on moneys paid out in fines as a result of fire service and police vehicles contravening speed limits.

Haulage Sector (Emissions)

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the emission levels of pollutants from the haulage sector were in each year since 1997, broken down by pollutant. [179926]

Mr. Jamieson: The emissions of the main pollutants, i.e. oxides of nitrogen (NO_X), particulate matter (PM_{10}), carbon monoxide (CO) and non-methane volatile organic compounds (NMVOC), for heavy goods vehicles (HGV's) are given in the following table from 1997 through to 2002, this being the latest date for which data are available. The emissions of carbon dioxide (CO_2), a global warming gas, are also included.

ktonnes

	NO_x	PM_{10}	CO	NMVOC	CO_2
1997	339.4	12.2	68.4	36.7	26,739
1998	335.3	11.4	66.9	34.0	26,983
1999	323.5	10.5	63.8	31.0	26,830
2000	306.6	9.1	60.5	28.6	26,546
2001	293.4	8.4	57.2	26.4	27,417
2002	284.3	7.8	54.6	24.5	29,410

Source:
2002 National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory.

IT Equipment

Mr. Flight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how often since 1997 *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its associated public sector organisations have undergone portable appliance testing of IT equipment; and what the cost was of portable appliance testing in each year since 1997. [176915]

Mr. McNulty: The Department for Transport was formed in May 2002 and as a result the information provided relates to the period from then.

In the Department's headquarters building Great Minster House in London portable appliance testing (PAT) is carried out annually and the latest available figures show expenditure of £19,016 and £15,005 excluding VAT for 2002 and 2003 respectively.

Elsewhere in the Department's Agencies PAT testing of portable equipment is normally carried out on annual basis for non-IT equipment. IT equipment is sometimes included in these tests but in other situations the checking is undertaken by IT engineers as part of servicing arrangements.

Comprehensive information on costs is not readily available because in some cases these are undifferentiated from other Mechanical and Electrical service contracts costs or are not accounted for separately in the individual finance systems. To separately identify such costs would involve disproportionate costs.

PFI/PPP Schemes

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the private finance initiative/public private partnership schemes his Department has entered into that have been subject to refinancing deals, indicating in each case how much of the windfall gain has been repaid to the Government. [179062]

Mr. McNulty: Details of the refinancing arrangements on Government sponsored PFI projects were published on 31 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1412W. The Department for Transport has also sponsored the following additional PFI and two PPP schemes that have been refinanced: Essex County Council A130 (PFI), London Underground—Tubelines (PPP), and National Air Traffic Control (PPP). Only the London Underground—Tubelines scheme generated a refranchising gain (£70 million), from which £42 million (60 per cent.) was repaid to Government.

Secure Stations Scheme

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many crimes have been committed at stations that meet secure station status in each year since the scheme's inception. [176964]

Mr. McNulty: The Secure Stations scheme was launched in 1998 to improve security and perceptions of security at railway stations. It is a national accreditation scheme recognising set standards of good practice in rail station, staff and passenger security. The national scheme covers all overground and underground rail stations across England, Wales and Scotland, which are policed by the British Transport Police. The first stations were accredited in 1998 and the number of stations in the scheme continues to increase.

The British Transport Police have provided the following information on crimes recorded at stations in the Secure Stations scheme for any given year in the period 2000–2004 when a station held accreditation. Data is not readily available for earlier than 2000.

	Crimes recorded at Secure Stations	*Number of Secure Stations*
2000–2001	16,351	84
2001–2002	22,735	128
2002–2003	30,077	167
2003–2004	31,815	174

Travel Costs

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 16 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 936–37W, on travel costs, if he will provide analogous data for air travel costs between 1974 and 2003. [180019]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 22 June 2004]:* The cost of air travel from 1996 to 2003 is shown in index form in the following table. This data is taken from the Consumer Price Index[1], published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Note that these figures are not adjusted for inflation.

The data between 1996 and 2000 are not comparable with data from 2001 onwards. Between 1996 and 2000, the index only includes the purchase of flights on the day of travel, and is not representative of all air travel.

[1] Like the Retail Price Index (RPI), the Consumer Price Index (CPI) measures the average change from month to month in the prices of consumer goods and services. However it differs in the particular households it represents, the range of goods and services included, and the way the index is constructed.

	Index (1996 = 100)
1996	100.0
1997	103.3
1998	107.3
1999	109.0
2000	111.5
2001	121.5
2002	120.1
2003	114.0

Source:
Consumer Price Index, Office for National Statistics

There is no information available prior to 1996 on the overall cost of air travel.

Vehicle Operator Services Agency

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress has been made in relation to the monitoring mechanisms for pay harmonisation and pay equalisation referred to in the business case submitted prior to the merger of the former Vehicle Inspectorate and the Traffic Area Network into the new Vehicle Operator Services Agency (VOSA); and if he will make

a statement on the decision not to fund centrally the cost of pay equalisation and pay harmonisation during the creation of VOSA. [180388]

Mr. Jamieson: Pay harmonisation is being achieved over a three year period 2003–06. As a Trading Fund, VOSA will be required to meet its costs from its fees and charges.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Arts Council Budget

Matthew Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the budget for the Arts Council for 2004–05 is; how much of this budget has been committed this year, and to what projects this money has been committed. [179943]

Estelle Morris: The budget for the Arts Council is set out in the following table.

Arts Council budget allocations-2004–05

	Budget £000	*Commitment £000*
Grant in Aid (GIA):		
Regularly Funded Organisations	280,081	279,515
Managed funds	28,000	2,919
Grants to Individuals	7,500	1,431
Creative Partnerships	25,000	25,000
GIA administration	23,677	23,677
Total	364,258	332,542
Lottery:		
Grants for National Touring	10,000	2,679
Grants to Organisations	41,000	7,982
Stabilisation/Recovery of large scale organisations	16,000	16,000
Capital Projects	89,500	89,500
National Foundation for Youth Music	10,000	10,000
Awards for All	7,000	1,790
Lottery administration	18,968	18,968
Total	192,468	146,919

Arts Council England's total Grant in Aid allocation for 2004–05 is £365,455,000.

Arts Council England's Lottery allocation for 2004–05 is £198,200,000. The Lottery budget is based on a cash flow forecasting exercise.

It is not possible to list all of the projects that have received funding for the period 2004–05. For example the Grant in Aid budget supports over 1200 regularly funded organisations.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Teenage Pregnancies

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the most recent rate of teenage pregnancies per thousand population was in *(a)* Longbridge ward, Birmingham, *(b)* Birmingham and *(c)* England; and what action he is taking to monitor efforts to reduce this rate. [179425]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The latest under 18 conception data available at a ward level show there were 35 conceptions to females aged under 18 in Longbridge ward in 2000. At ward level, teenage pregnancy rates per thousand population can only be estimated due to the lack of accurate population denominators. An estimated aggregated rate for 1998–2000 for Longbridge ward shows an under 18 conception rate around 72 per 1,000 females aged 15–17.

(a) The latest under 18 conception rate for Birmingham shows a provisional rate of 49.9 per 1,000 females aged 15–17 in 2002. This compares with a 1998 rate of 58.6 per 1,000 females aged 15–17.

(b) The latest under 18 conception rate for England shows a provisional rate of 42.6 per 1,000 females aged 15–17 in 2002. This compares with a 1998 rate of 47.0 per 1,000 females aged 15–17.

Monitoring of the implementation of the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy is undertaken at both a national and local level. At a national level, an Independent Advisory Group (IAG) provides advice to Government and monitors the overall success of the strategy. Its membership of 25 meets quarterly and members make visits to local areas to learn about implementation of the local teenage pregnancy strategies.

At a local level, implementation of the teenage pregnancy strategy in each top-tier local authority in England is reviewed every six months. Local areas submit annual reports and forward action plans at the end of March. These are assessed by regional assessment panels and written feedback given by the Regional Teenage Pregnancy Co-ordinator and the Teenage Pregnancy Unit. The Regional Teenage Pregnancy Co-ordinators also conduct six monthly review meetings to discuss progress.

Departmental Secondments

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many staff in his Department and its agencies were seconded from the *(a)* private and *(b)* academic sector in each of the last three years. [175368]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The number of secondments from the private and academic sector for each year from April 2002 is:

April to March	*Private Sector*	*Academic Sector*
2002–03	6	34
2003–04	7	29

Information for April 2001 to March 2002 is not available in the form requested.

Free School Meals (Surrey)

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills why the number of secondary school pupils in Surrey taking free school meals in January 2002 was higher than the number eligible for free school meals; and if he will make a statement. [179092]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: We have investigated the difference and unfortunately found that the number of pupils taking free school meals in Surrey secondary schools in January 2002 as previously published by the Department was not accurate.

The available statistics are based upon returns from the Annual Schools Census. These returns provide the number of pupils who had a free school meal at lunchtime on the Census day itself. One secondary school in Surrey recorded an incorrect total in the 2002 Annual Schools Census. This was the first year of a change from paper forms to electronic returns and this error was not noticed at the time. The published statistics reflect the data as returned by the school; hence the Surrey total was erroneously higher than the number of pupils who were eligible for a free meal. I have instructed officials to highlight this error on the Department's statistical website where the 2002 figures are published and to check other related publications.

Numbers of pupils eligible to receive free school meals are also derived from the Annual Schools Census. The eligibility information is collected at pupil level and is subject to more detailed validation checks. The pupil level returns are aggregated to form school and LEA statistics that are widely used within the Department and beyond. There are no known concerns about the accuracy of the eligibility statistics.

Post-16 Education

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether there are systematic checks on eligibility for post-16 education. [177943]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Yes. Eligibility checks on post-16, excluding higher education, students are determined by the eligibility requirements, the level of risk of abuse and the need to minimise bureaucratic burdens on learners, learning providers and employers. This is an operational matter and the responsibility of the Learning and Skills Council. Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will write to the hon. Member with this information and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Student Loan Company

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will publish the results of the pilot project for the Student Loan Company protocol computer system conducted in 2003, including feedback from local education authorities. [179589]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 21 June 2004]:* We have no plans to publish operational reports. However, the hon. Gentleman may wish to know that the 2003 pilot of the Protocol system was successful. All but a very small number of students who applied by the published deadlines in the pilot areas were paid at the start of term; all students in these areas who applied on-time had a payment by 25 September 2003. These results were an important part of the decision to roll-out the new system to all local education authorities (LEAs): a decision which was agreed with all stakeholders including representatives from LEAs.

As with any pilot there were lessons learned and comments from LEAs about the way the system operated. The Student Loans Company have taken steps to address these issues in the design of the 2004/05 version of the system.

Truancy

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what further steps he proposes to tackle truancy. [179904]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Promoting regular school attendance is a key component in the Government's strategy to raise educational standards. Tackling truancy, in particular, also contributes to the Government's objectives to reduce street crime and antisocial behaviour.

The Department for Education and Skills will continue to promote a full range of measures to raise attendance and reduce truancy including:

strengthening schools' capacity to manage attendance through audit and training materials and consultancy provided through the Key Stage 3 and Primary Strategies;

providing intensive support for schools facing the greatest challenges through the Behaviour Improvement Programme;

co-ordinating further national programmes of truancy sweeps, to generate local publicity and deter parentally condoned absences

national rollout of the "Fast-track" case management system the aim of which is to ensure that schools and LEAs deal with attendance cases quickly and in the most effective way to get the child back into school;

the introduction of new parenting contracts to enable schools and LEAs to engage earlier and more effectively with parents of children who are truanting. But where parents are unwilling to accept such voluntary and supportive measures we have introduced penalty notices for truancy as a speedy alternative to prosecution.

These measures indicate the Department's focus on truancy as a high priority for improvement.

Wirral Metropolitan College

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when he will inform Wirral Metropolitan College of its budget allocation for 2004–05. [179896]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 22 June 2004]:* The LSC expects to confirm indicative allocations for all colleges immediately and final allocations including additional performance related funding by the 30 June 2004.

CABINET OFFICE

Government Car Service

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office pursuant to his answer of 12 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1569W, on Government cars, if he will list each occasion when Government whips have, since 1 January 2003, made use of a car from the Government car service pool, giving in each case the *(a)* date of use and *(b)* name of the whip. [160688]

Mr. Alexander: The responsibility for the provision of ministerial cars and drivers has been delegated under the terms of the Framework Document to the Government Car and Despatch Agency. I have asked its Chief Executive Mr. Nick Matheson to write to the hon. Member. Copies of his letter will be placed in the Library.

Government Online Services

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office pursuant to the oral answer of 18 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 822, on e-Government, if he will break down by Department the £1 billion provided to improve take-up of Government online services. [179788]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 22 June 2004]:* The £1 billion my hon. Friend referred to is the amount which was allocated during the 2002 Spending Review to invest in broadband connectivity for public services. The main recipients of these are: the Department for Education and Skills, for plans to provide all primary and secondary schools with 2Mb and 8Mb broadband connections respectively by 2006; the national health service, to provide all general practitioners practices with 256k connectively, and all hospitals, primary care trusts and other health authorities with a minimum of 2Mb; the Criminal Justice System to provide information communication technology infrastructure across the six major criminal justice organisations-police, crown prosecution service, magistrates courts, crown court, probation and prisons.

Responsibility for effective co-ordination of this expenditure rests with the Department for Trade and Industry.

Government Websites

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what measures he proposes to take to rectify problems with *(a)* missing files, *(b)* management of website structures, *(c)* the use of illegal characters in web addresses, *(d)* problems with compliance with the Government's search index system and *(e)* hosting websites on servers that are not able to manage demand in respect of Government websites. [179768]

Mr. Alexander: The Cabinet Office has published the "Guidelines for UK Government Websites", which provides extensive advice to Government web managers. In practice the overall management, both technical and editorial, of Government websites is the responsibility of individual Departments and Agencies.

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office if he will make a statement on the compliance of Government websites with Web Accessibility Initiative guidelines. [179769]

Mr. Alexander: I refer the hon. Member to the response given to him on 14 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 721W, on Government Websites.

HEALTH

Health Services (Rochdale)

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in the parliamentary constituency of Rochdale are receiving treatment for drug dependency; and what percentage are *(a)* women, *(b)* under 20 and *(c)* from an ethnic minority. [178501]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested.

In 2000–01, there were 712 people receiving drug treatment in the area covered by the drug action team in Rochdale. Data broken down by drug action team for 2001–02 and 2002–03 has not been finalised.

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on waiting times for heart surgery on the NHS in Rochdale. [178435]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The latest figures available show that no one waited more than nine months for a heart operation in the Rochdale Primary Care Trust (PCT) area. The total number of people waiting for a heart operation in the Rochdale PCT area was 264.

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many residents in Rochdale awaiting heart surgery have had the option of choosing an alternative hospital for quicker treatment in the last 12 months. [178436]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not held centrally.

Since July 2002, patients who have been waiting for six months for heart operations have been offered the choice of faster treatment at another hospital, in either the national health service or the independent sector.

A and E Waiting Times

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time at accident and emergency departments at the *(a)* Royal Free, *(b)* North Middlesex, *(c)* Whittington, *(d)* Homerton and *(e)* University College hospitals was at (i) the latest available date and (ii) for each of the past three years. [179641]

Mr. Hutton: We do not collect figures on average waiting times in accident and emergency departments. However, we do publish data on the percentage of patients spending four hours or less in accident and emergency departments from arrival to discharge, admission or transfer. These figures can be found on the department's website at http://www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity/data_requests/total_time_ae.htm

Acute Mental Illness Beds (Sefton)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many acute mental illness beds were available for *(a)* the elderly, *(b)* children and *(c)* other age groups in Sefton in each of the last three years; and how many were secure units. [177858]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information most closely associated with place of residency is not collected on a constituency level but at national health service trust level. The information is shown in the following table.

NHS organisation	Elderly 2001–01	2001–02	2002–03	Children 2001–01	2001–02	2002–03
Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sefton PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
Five Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust	—	—	204	—	—	—
Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Trust	—	—	142	—	—	10
Mersey Care NHS Trust	—	151	149	—	—	—
Royal Liverpool Childrens NHS Trust	—	—	—	8	9	9

NHS organisation	Other ages 2001–01	2001–02	2002–03	Secure (other) 2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sefton PCT	—	—	—	—	—	—
Five Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust	—	—	302	—	—	20
Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Trust	—	—	272	—	—	15
Mersey Care NHS Trust	—	314	316	—	17	44
Royal Liverpool Childrens NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	—	—

Alcohol

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how he plans to curb teenage alcohol consumption. [179826]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 23 June 2004]:* Existing licensing legislation expressly prohibits the sale of alcohol to the under 18s and its consumption by them on licensed premises in certain circumstances. The implementation of the Licensing Act 2003 will further tighten these laws by extending their scope, increasing penalties, removing existing anomalies and making licences more instantly at risk of forfeit where offences take place.

My right hon. Friend, The Home Secretary announced on 11 June 2004 that the Home Office police standards unit, working in partnership with the Association of Chief Police Officers, will be inviting forces and other partners from across the country to take part in a co-ordinated programme of enforcement and initiatives to tackle alcohol fuelled violence. The campaign includes targeting the irresponsible few who encourageunderage and binge drinking and targeting drunken behaviour. This takes forward one of the recommendations in the Government's alcohol harm reduction strategy for England.

The Department produces a number of leaflets for young people and their parents setting out the risks of alcohol misuse. The Department also plans to develop a range of new health promotion messages for binge drinkers, many of whom will be teenagers. The Government's alcohol harm reduction strategy for England set out the framework of a voluntary social responsibility scheme for alcohol producers and retailers. The Department and the Home Office will work with the drinks industry to develop this scheme.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in the Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care Trust have been treated for alcohol-related illness in each of the last five years. [180058]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

Finished admissions into national health service hospitals for patients resident in Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care Trust 1998–99 to 2002–03 with a primary diagnosis of "alcohol-related illness"

	Finished admissions
1998–99	230
1999–2000	230
2000–01	204
2001–02	243
2002–03	246

Notes:

Finished Admission Episodes

A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.

Ungrossed Data

Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).

Source:

Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health.

Antidepressants

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many working days were spent between June 2003 and May 2004 on the review of selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitors and related antidepressants being conducted by the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency and Committee on Safety of Medicines. [179718]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Committee on Safety of Medicines' (CSM) expert working group on the safety of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors was established in May 2003 and met 11 times between June 2003 and May 2004. The CSM has considered reports from the expert working group on seven occasions. A range of staff from a number of different disciplines within the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency has been involved in the review at various stages. It is not possible to provide a meaningful estimate of the number of working days spent on the review because the proportion of staff time dedicated to the review has varied according to the type of input required over the time period in question.

Arm's Length Bodies

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate how many employees of his Department are to be transferred to a departmental arm's length body as part of the Change programme. [175312]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We estimate that 415 posts will be transferred to departmental arms length bodies as part of the Department's change programme. Those bodies are themselves being reviewed, as my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, said in his written statement on 20 May.

Attitude Surveys

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what surveys of public perceptions of *(a)* his Department, *(b)* the NHS and *(c)* other areas of responsibility of the Department have taken place over the last 12 months; what the (i) title and (ii) nature of these surveys was; what the findings of each survey were; where these findings have been published; what the cost of all surveys was; and if he will make a statement and place copies of the surveys in the Library. [174338]

Ms Rosie Winterton: For the Department, we have not commissioned any surveys into public perceptions over the past 12 months.

The Department commissioned an opinion research agency, MORI, to carry out a survey into public perceptions of the national health service in winter 2003. The full report, called "Public perceptions of the NHS tracking survey", has been published on the MORI website and can be accessed through the Department's website at: http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/PublishedSurvey/ListOfSurveySince1990/fs/en

Copies have been placed in the Library.

Based on a relatively small national sample of 1,000 interviews, the results provide a useful check on public sentiment and patient experience to complement the much larger patient surveys undertaken by the former Commission for Health Improvement and its successor, the Commission for Healthcare Audit and Inspection. Results have been shared with NHS senior managers and stakeholders to inform policy objectives and business planning. These surveys show high levels of patient satisfaction with the NHS.

Since 2000, we have carried out six such surveys into public perceptions of the national health service at a total cost of £236,950 (plus VAT). This figure also includes a small amount of qualitative work carried out with the 2000 survey.

For other areas of responsibility, information on surveys into public perceptions of the Department's arm's length bodies could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Breakfast

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans his Department has for promoting the benefits of eating breakfast to children. [179827]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 23 June 2004]:* The Department is undertaking a healthier breakfast club pilot project as part of the joint Department of Health/Department for Education and Skills "Food in Schools" (FiS) programme. The results of this, and the other seven Department of Health-led FiS pilot projects, will be disseminated to schools early next year.

Deaf-Blind People

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps his Department is taking to ensure health staff have the relevant training to provide an effective service to deaf-blind people. [180203]

Mr. Hutton: NHSU, the organisation set up by the Department to establish a university for the national health service, is leading the development and delivery of disability equality and awareness training tools and resources as part of a wider disability learning and development strategy. An initial prototype learning programme, aimed at providing staff with a broad overview of disability awareness, will be ready for consultation in the autumn.

Delayed Discharge Charging

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many chargeable days NHS trusts in England have reported since liability for delayed discharge charging came into effect; and what the total charging liability since this date is. [179590]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 21 June 2004]:* Between 5 January 2004, when charging for delayed discharges was introduced and 28 March 2004, national health service trusts reported 58,724 days of delay to discharge because of patients awaiting social services.

Information on agreed legal liabilities for charging will be collected centrally at the end of the first six months of the scheme. The majority of councils have arranged local investment agreements with the NHS and will only pay charges for delays falling outside this agreement.

Departmental Vacancies

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he will publish his Department's vacancies survey for March. [180345]

Mr. Hutton: The national health service staff vacancy survey 2004 is due for publication in July 2004.

Domestic Violence

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make domestic violence training mandatory for all health professionals. [178809]

Mr. Hutton: Responsibility for professional education rests with the respective colleges and relevant professional bodies. The Department will support health professionals in establishing domestic violence policy, practice and training programmes in a number of ways. "Domestic Violence: A Resource Manual for Health Care Professionals", published in 2000, is being revised to include new material on training. In addition, the REFUGE therapists manual and training materials

coming out of the University of the West of England pilot funded by the Department will be widely disseminated. Significant work has also been done by the national domestic violence health practitioners forum that will feed into the violence and abuse programme expert group on domestic violence for dissemination from April 2005. A national conference is planned for September 2004 which will provide the focus for all this work to come together as a resource for health professionals to enable them to access appropriate training.

Drug Applications

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the average *(a)* amount and *(b)* proportion of working days spent on scrutiny of new drug applications that is accounted for by examination of raw data from Phase 3 clinical trials. [179575]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Companies are required to submit, for review and assessment, summaries of all the clinical data and these are much more useful than the examination of the actual raw data for helping to determine the quality, safety and efficacy of products. The average amount of time spent by all assessors assessing a new drug is approximately 50 working days, only a small proportion of which is spent on review of raw data.

Drug Licensing

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of the fees charged for the licensing of a new drug is typically earmarked for post-marketing surveillance; and what his estimate is of the average amount payable for each new drug made available for that purpose. [179719]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Initial application fees for new drugs cover the work associated with the assessment and evaluation of an application prior to granting a marketing authorisation. Fees for post-marketing surveillance of authorised drugs are charged through an annual service fee for each live marketing authorisation. This service fee covers a number of activities, including enforcement, renewals and post-marketing surveillance activities and it accounts for around 36 per cent., of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency's annual budget.

The service fee is tiered according to the type of application, to reflect the increased post-marketing activity in newer drugs, compared to well established generic drugs. A newly authorised medicine attracts an annual service fee of £14,768, compared to £1,521 for an established prescription only medicine, or £275 for a general sale list product. Because the service fee covers a number of activities, it is not possible to estimate the amount available purely for post-marketing surveillance for each new product.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what agreements exist between the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency and pharmaceutical companies that define *(a)* the basis on which drug licence fees are set and charged and *(b)* for what purpose fees may legitimately be used; and if he will publish them. [179720]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No agreements exist between the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and the pharmaceutical companies in relation to fees.

The Medicines Acts 1968 and 1971 require the MHRA to consult the pharmaceutical industry and other interested parties on any proposals to amend the Fees Regulations. Parliamentary approval is then required.

The MHRA is a Government trading fund and as such, is required to cover its full costs, in relation to the regulation of medicines, from user-fees. Fees paid to the MHRA may be used for purposes set out in the Medicines (Fixing of Fees Relating to Medicinal Products for Human Use) Order 1989 (SI 1989 No 684 amended by SI 1995 No 871), which specifies costs and activities which may be taken into account when setting fees for the MHRA. These include functions of the medicines advisory bodies, all functions relating to European and United Kingdom medicines regulations, enforcement of regulations and premises and equipment overheads.

MHRA fees are published and are available in the Library and on the MHRA's website.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency's fee income is allocated to post-marketing surveillance. [179721]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The proportion of income fees allocated to post-marketing surveillance by the medicines sector of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency for 2003–04 was approximately 30 per cent.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the licensing authority has conducted an audit of the reliability of summaries of clinical data provided by pharmaceutical companies applying for new drug licence applications. [179722]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency does scrutinise companies' raw data when considered necessary to ensure the reliability of summaries of clinical data. This may be done in various ways including looking at original patients' trial records, reviewing extensive listings of data and sometimes re-analysing the data.

Drug Rehabilitation (Crosby)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action he is taking to reduce waiting times for drug rehabilitation in Crosby; what the budget is for the drug action team in Crosby in 2004–05; and how many people have been seen by the drug action team in each of the last three years. [177855]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not available centrally. The Crosby area is covered by the Sefton drug action team, which is equivalent to the Sefton Metropolitan local authority area.

The Government have invested substantial extra funding for drug treatment with the total pooled drug treatment budget increasing by over 100 per cent. since it was introduced in 2001–02. In 2004–05, the total pooled drug treatment budget allocation for the Sefton drug action team was £1,490,000, including young people's pooled drug treatment budget allocation, which is issued separately from the adult allocation.

The latest national waiting time figures show that additional funding has helped to reduce average waiting times for drug treatment from five to 11 weeks in 2001 to two to four weeks by April 2004.

A census of drug users in treatment was carried out in 2000 to estimate the number of drug users in England in contact with drug treatment agencies in 2000–01. The number of drug users reported as being in treatment in the Sefton drug action team area was 936. Data has been published in a statistical bulletin "Statistics from the Regional Drug Misuse Databases on drug misusers in treatment in England, 2000–01". This is available on the Department's website at http://www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public/sb0133.htm.

Drug Treatment (Lancashire)

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the spending in Chorley on drug treatment was in each of the last five years, broken down by *(a)* gender and *(b)* whether the patients were under or over 18; [179526]

(2) what the budget for drug treatment for Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care Trust is in 2004–05. [179527]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested. Allocations of funding for particular treatments are matters for local primary care trusts (PCTs).

The budget for the drug action team for Lancashire, which covers the Chorley and South Ribble PCT, is £4.26 million in 2004–05.

Foundation Trusts

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the estimated cost to an NHS trust is of developing an application for foundation trust status. [179592]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 21 June 2004]:* The Department does not hold information as to the cost involved in developing an application for national health service foundation trust (NHSFT) status as costs will vary from trust to trust. The NHSFT model allows trusts to tailor their proposals to meet the individual circumstances of their hospital and community, within certain parameters set out in legislation. There will be, for example, significant local variation on costs surrounding the creation and maintenance of a membership organisation. The cost of each election will also vary depending on the size of the electorate and the level of documentation provided. It would appear that typical costs for the elections for the first NHSFTs have come out at a little over £1 per member. The costs of the governance arrangements will not necessarily be entirely additional as they will replicate some current activity that NHS trusts are already doing around informing the public, patients and staff about issues affecting the trust.

The Department has provided £250,000 direct financial support to each wave 1 applicant and, to date, £175,000 to wave 1A applicants to assist them in their preparations for their application and establishment as a NHSFT. It is for each trust to determine how this resource is best spent.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average cost has been of setting up a foundation trust. [179283]

Mr. Hutton: The Department does not hold information as to the cost involved in developing an application for national health service foundation trust (NHSFT) status as costs will vary from trust to trust. The NHSFT model allows trusts to tailor their proposals to meet the individual circumstances of their hospital and community, within certain parameters set out in legislation. There will be, for example, significant local variation on costs surrounding the creation and maintenance of a membership organisation. The cost of each election will also vary depending on the size of the electorate and the level of documentation provided. It would appear that typical costs for the elections for the first NHSFTs have come out at a little over £1 per member. The costs of the governance arrangements will not necessarily be entirely additional as they will replicate some current activity that NHS trusts are already doing around informing the public, patients and staff about issues affecting the trust.

The Department has provided £250,000 direct financial support to each wave 1 applicant and, to date, £175,000 to wave 1A applicants to assist them in their preparations for their application and establishment as a NHSFT. It is for each trust to determine how this resource is best spent.

Free Eye Tests

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many senior citizens from the Tamworth constituency have taken up free eye tests. [179957]

Dr. Ladyman: Data for the number of sight tests by constituency or by the number of senior citizens is not collected centrally.

The total population for those aged 60 and over in Shropshire and Staffordshire Strategic Health Authority is about 320,450. All people aged 60 and over are eligible for national health service sight tests.

The total number of NHS sight tests paid for by Shropshire and Staffordshire Strategic Health Authority in the year 2002–03 for the aged 60 and over category was 138,040. Sight tests cannot be equated to the number of patients.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many pensioners in Warrington North have benefited from free eye tests since their introduction. [180084]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data for the number of sight tests by constituency or by the number of senior citizens is not collected centrally.

In 2002–03, the total number of national health service sight tests paid for patients aged 60 and over in Cheshire and Merseyside strategic health authority was

201,180. The total number eligible for a free sight test for those aged 60 and over was 507,080. Sight tests cannot be equated to the numbers of patients.

Genito-urinary Care

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what *(a)* monitoring and *(b)* research has been conducted by and for his Department on waiting times for genito-urinary medicine services. [179156]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department is currently examining with the Health Protection Agency ways in which data on waiting times at genito-urinary medicine (GUM) clinics can be obtained. Early this year, the Department undertook pilot surveys in a number of GUM clinics where patients were asked to complete a short anonymous questionnaire seeking information on waiting times. These pilots have proved successful and the first full national survey of clinics took place in May this year and are currently being analysed.

Glue Sniffing

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 14 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 682W, on glue sniffing, what information is held centrally on the problem of glue sniffing among teenagers; and if he will make a statement. [180272]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department commissions an annual national survey of secondary schoolchildren aged 11 to 15 about drug use, including glue, gas, aerosols or solvents, smoking and drinking among young people in England. The survey for 2003 was carried out by the national centre for social research (NatCen) and the national foundation for educational research (NFER), and was published in March 2004 by the Department. This document is available in the Library.

In addition, the Department funds the Department of Public Health Sciences at St. George's hospital medical school to collect statistics on deaths associated with the abuse of gas fuels, aerosols, glues and other solvent based products. The 16th annual report "Trends in Death Associated with abuse of volatile substances 1971–2001" highlighting mortality statistics for 2001, was published on 21 July 2003, and can be found on St. George's website at http://www.vsareport.org.

Hip Replacements

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average cost of a primary hip replacement, undertaken on the NHS as an elective in-patient planned admission by an NHS trust, has been in each year since 1998. [179880]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 22 June 2004]:* The national average cost of a primary hip replacement undertaken as an elective in-patient planned admission, in a national health service trust in each year since 1998 is shown in the table.

Reference cost collection	*National average unit cost (£)*
1998 [financial year 1997–98][1]	3,678
1999 [financial year 1998–99]	3,755
2000 [financial year 1999–2000]	3,899
2001 [financial year 2000–01]	4,179
2002 [financial year 2001–02]	4,356
2003 [financial year 2002–03]	4,660

[1] Figure may include elements of critical care service expenditure (subsequently removed from composite admitted patient care Healthcare Resource Group and separately identified).

Sources:

The New NHS 1998 Reference Costs, Appendix 1A.
The New NHS 1999 Reference Costs, Appendix 1A.
Reference Costs 2000, Appendix 1A.
Reference Costs 2001, Appendix 1A.
Reference Costs 2002.
Payment by Results Core Tools 2004, Appendix SRC1 A.
Copies of all above publications are available in the Library.

Hospital Reconfigurations

Dr. Richard Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many reviews of contested hospital reconfigurations the NHS Independent Reconfiguration Panel has undertaken since its formation; and how many are awaiting referral by the Secretary of State to the panel. [178840]

Mr. Hutton: The independent reconfiguration panel (IRP) has, since its establishment, offered advice to the Secretary of State on one contested proposal for reconfiguration of services in East Kent.

The Government's aim is to ensure that options for national health service change are developed with the help and support of local people and that, wherever possible, disagreements are resolved locally without recourse to Ministers. To assist this, the IRP also offers generic advice and assistance on reconfiguration issues to NHS organisations, local authorities and other interested bodies up to the commencement of formal consultation. So far this year, the IRP has advised on proposals under development in North London, Teeside, Avon, Hampshire and Manchester. There are no reviews of contested reconfigurations currently awaiting referral by the Secretary of State to the IRP.

Insulin

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what studies his Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the clinical effectiveness of (i) animal-based insulins and (ii) other insulins; and if he will make a statement. [R] [179547]

Ms Rosie Winterton: All authorised insulins, whether human insulin or animal insulin, have been demonstrated to be efficacious in people with diabetes mellitus. As part of the licensing approval process for any medicinal product, including insulins, the applicant has to provide evidence that the product meets appropriate standards of quality, safety and efficacy. This will include clinical trail data in patients with diabetes. The decision to use one or other of the insulins rests with the physician in consultation with the patient.

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Authority does not commission separate studies.

Iron Deficiency Anaemia

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the Healthy Start Scheme will address the condition of iron deficiency anaemia in infants; and if he will make a statement. [179629]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In line with the recommendations of the committee on medical aspects of food and nutrition policy (COMA), Healthy Start will provide vouchers to qualifying pregnant women and families that can be exchanged for fresh fruit and vegetables as well as milk and infant formula. Advice and support will be offered to beneficiaries to help them establish healthy diets that contain appropriate vitamins and minerals.

Additional vouchers will be given to qualifying families with children aged 0–12 months from estimated date of delivery if later than their first birthday. This reflects COMA's concern that low birth weight babies have an increased risk of developing iron deficiency. Healthy Start will also provide vouchers to all women under 18 who become pregnant, regardless of their family income, because of their increased nutritional vulnerability.

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment he has made of a possible link between iron deficiency anaemia and socio-economic deprivation; [179630]

(2) what percentage of children were affected by iron deficiency anaemia in the last period for which figures are available. [179631]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department undertakes regular surveys to monitor the diet and health of children. The national diet and nutrition survey (NDNS) indicated that the reported prevalence of anaemia varies markedly between populations studied. The NDNS showed that more than 10 per cent, of children aged 1.5 to 2.5 years were anaemic. This fell to 6 per cent. for children aged 2.5 to 3.5 years. Iron intakes are also considerably lower in young women with 50 per cent. of 15 to 18-year-olds with intakes well below the recommended amounts, which can put them at risk of iron deficiency anaemia.

There are no significant regional differences or differences by household benefit status for men or women in iron deficiency anaemia, although it is more common among certain ethnic groups such as those from an Asian and Afro-Caribbean background. However, lower intakes of both iron and vitamin C, which helps in the adsorption of iron, were associated with manual groups.

Medicines (Prescription in Hospitals)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will make it a priority to publish data provided by IMS on the prescription of medicines in hospitals for the treatment of [redacted] cancer, *(b)* rheumatological conditions and *(c)* hepatitis C; [179448]

(2) when he expects to publish the data provided by IMS on the availability and prescription in hospitals of medicines which have received positive National Institute for Clinical Excellence approval. [179449]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has recently reached agreement with IMS on the provision of data on the use of medicines in English hospitals. The intention is that the Department will publish information annually, six months after the end of the period. The first publication will be in the summer of 2005. Together with the annual publication of information about prescriptions dispensed in the community, this will give a much fuller picture of the use of medicines in the national health service.

Mental Health Services (Devon)

Mrs. Browning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the amount spent by each primary care trust (PCT) in Devon on mental health services *(a)* by percentage of total budget and *(b)* in cash terms for each year that the PCTs have been operational. [179823]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 22 June 2004]:* The information requested is shown in the table.

Expenditure on the commissioning of mental illness services by primary care trusts (PCT) in Devon

	2000-01		2001-02		2002-03	
	Cash expenditure (£000)	As a percentage of total budget	Cash expenditure (£000)	As a percentage of total budget	Cash expenditure (£000)	As a percentage of total budget
East Devon PCT	n/a	n/a	61	0.09	8,293	7.26
Exeter PCT	n/a	n/a	1,307	1.51	9,438	7.11
Mid Devon PCT	n/a	n/a	492	0.89	12,932	13.95
North Devon PCT	n/a	n/a	32	0.03	10,384	7.43
Plymouth PCT	n/a	n/a	3,414	1.68	25,949	10.27
South Hams and West Devon PCT	3,283	8.99	6,809	9.24	4,904	5.66
Teignbridge PCT	n/a	n/a	6,837	9.07	11,311	11.60
Torbay PCT	4,360	9.51	8,984	8.37	7,960	5.47

NHS (Language Services)

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health by what methods and at what intervals his Department will monitor the delivery of the NHS Direct language services contract; and if he will publish future performance assessments. [179668]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The NHS Direct language service contract will be monitored through monthly activity reports and quarterly review meetings. The performance assessments will be available on request.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether, following the recent award of the contract to supply interpreting and translation services

by NHS Direct (OJEC ref: 2003/S153–139660), all NHS patients will continue to have their interpretation needs met by UK-based interpreters. [179670]

Ms Rosie Winterton: National health service interpreters provided within the NHS Direct contract will, for the most part, be United Kingdom based. Where non-UK based interpreters and translators are used they must under the terms of the contract, have a qualification which is equivalent to that of UK-based interpreters and a reasonable understanding of the NHS.

NHS Productivity

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what estimate he has made of the change in NHS productivity in each year since 1997; what measures he uses to calculate NHS productivity; and if he will make a statement; [178215]

(2) what the evidential basis is for the assessment that there has been a 1.5 per cent. annual improvement in NHS productivity. [178216]

Mr. Hutton: The chief executive's report, published in May 2004, highlighted a number of areas where the national health service is becoming more productive including:

Productivity improvements in the ambulance service and cardiology.

Quantifiable improvements in results—both outcomes and outputs—with improvements in premature mortality from coronary heart disease, cancer and suicide and faster access and treatment throughout the NHS.

Health promotion measures, such as 'flu injections, which provide value for money.

Control of overheads and wastage with, for example, lower management costs than other organisations, improved procurement and project management and control of bureaucracy.

The Department has been undertaking work on productivity measurement including the development on an interim measure of NHS cost efficiency that takes account of expenditure on improving the quality of NHS services. Although this measure is still under development and not yet finalised, initial results suggest that cost efficiency in 2002–03 improved by over 1 per cent.

Further work by the Department to improve productivity measurement is now being undertaken in conjunction with the Office for National Statistics and with the review of measurement of Government output and productivity commissioned by Len Cook. Two aims of this review, led by Sir Tony Atkinson, are to improve the way health outputs are measured in the national accounts and to support improved measures of health productivity.

NHS Security

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many security incidents he estimates there were in the NHS in England in each year since 1996. [179154]

Mr. Hutton: Information on security incidents is available for the period 1999 to 2002. This is shown in the table.

	Number of incidents
1999–2000	106,935
2000–01	112,095
2001–02	166,667

Note:
No statistics are available for the period 1996 to 1999 and 2002 to the present.

The national health service security management service is currently developing methods to ensure that security incidents are reported and recorded in a simple consistent manner across the NHS.

NHS Statistics (London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients there were per general practitioner within greater London, broken down by borough *(a)* on the most recent recorded date and *(b)* in 1997. [179397]

Mr. Hutton: The table shows the number of patients registered with a general practitioner unrestricted principal or equivalent, divided by the number of all GPs, excluding GP retainers and GP registrars. Figures for 1997 are only available by strategic health authority (SHA) area. Information by SHA area is provided for 1997 and 2002. Officials are investigating some localised anomalies in patient figures for 2003 and revised figures for 2003 will be available shortly.

GPs (excluding retainers, registrars and locums)[1] and patients of unrestricted principals and equivalents (UPEs)[2] for London by strategic health authority and primary care trust

Numbers (headcount)

		1997		
		GPs (excluding retainers, registrars and locums[1])	*Patients of UPEs[2]*	*Patients of UPEs per GP (excluding retainers, registrars and locums)*
London		4,324	7,936,576	1,835
Of which				
North central London	Q05	744	1,401,419	1,884
North east London	Q06	849	1,572,827	1,853
North west London	Q04	1,164	2,031,706	1,745
South east London	Q07	833	1,578,888	1,895
South west London	Q08	734	1,351,736	1,842

		2002		
		GPs (excluding retainers, registrars and locums[1])	Patients of UPEs[2]	Patients of UPEs per GP (excluding retainers, registrars and locums)
London		4,327	8,122,456	1,877
Of which				
North central London	Q05	743	1,394,454	1,877
North east London	Q06	874	1,647,64	21,885
North west London	Q04	1,088	2,040,719	1,876
South east London	Q07	876	1,629,989	1,861
South west London	Q08	746	1,409,652	1,890

[1] All practitioners (excluding retainers, registrars and locums) include UPEs, restricted principals, assistants, salaried doctors (Para 52 SFA), PMS other and flexible career scheme GPs and GP returners
[2] UPEs include GMS unrestricted principals, PMS contracted GPs and PMS salaried GPs.
Data as at 1 October 1997 and 30 September 2003
Source:
Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many qualified radiographers have been employed in Greater London, broken down by national health service trust, in each of the last five years. [179398]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is shown in the table for a five year period ending 2003, which is the latest available information held.

NHS hospital and community health services: Qualified radiography staff in the London regional office area by strategic health authority area and by organisation as at 30 September each specified year

Headcount

		1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
London		1,964	1,946	1,924	1,888	1,879
North West London SHA	Q04	396	417	406	399	389
Chelsea and Westminster Healthcare NHS Trust	RQM	46	44	47	41	40
Ealing Hospital NHS Trust	RC3	28	26	23	20	20
Hillingdon HA	QA2	2	2	2	[	[
Hillingdon PCT	5AT	[	[	[	2	1
North West London Hospitals NHS Trust	RV8	81	77	74	68	70
Parkside Health NHS Trust	RDA	1	[	[	[	[
Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Trust	RT3	19	52	45	55	51
St. Mary's NHS Trust	RJ5	43	39	41	46	41
The Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust	RQN	117	107	100	95	96
The Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust	RAS	27	40	43	41	42
West London Mental Health NHS Trust	RKL	[	[	[	1	1
West Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust	RFW	32	30	31	30	27
North Central London SHA	Q05	456	468	454	417	414
Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust	RVL	77	77	75	78	77
Camden PCT	5K7	[	[	[	[	1
Great Ormond Street Hospital For Children NHS Trust	RP4	32	43	41	39	30
Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Trust	RP6	1	1	1	1	1
North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust	RAP	62	61	56	51	56
Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust	RAN	25	25	27	24	22
The Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust	RAL	76	85	76	75	74
University College London Hospitals NHS Trust	RRV	152	143	142	118	122
Whittington Hospital NHS Trust	RKE	31	33	36	31	31
North East London SHA	Q06	350	338	322	322	333
Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS Trust	RF4	[	[	94	95	105
BHB Community Healthcare NHS Trust	RG6	2	2	[	[	[
Forest Healthcare NHS Trust	RDF	38	39	[	[	[
Havering Hospitals NHS Trust	RG7	74	80	[	[	[
Havering PCT	5A4	[	[	1	1	1
Homerton University Hospital NHS Trust	RQX	25	26	24	25	30
Newham Community Health Services NHS Trust	RRH	[	1	[	[	[
Newham Healthcare NHS Trust	RNH	26	25	25	22	20
Newham PCT	5C5	[	[	1	[	[
Redbridge Health Care NHS Trust	RG4	27	23	[	[	[
The Royal Hospitals NHS Trust	RNJ	158	142	134	138	141
Whipps Cross University Hospital NHS Trust	RGC	[	[	43	41	36
South East London SHA	Q07	382	370	390	384	386
Bromley Hospitals NHS Trust	RG3	36	35	37	33	41
Guy's and St. Thomas' Hospital NHS Trust	RJ1	140	129	128	138	142
King's College Hospital NHS Trust	RJZ	87	96	97	87	81

NHS hospital and community health services: Qualified radiography staff in the London regional office area by strategic health authority area and by organisation as at 30 September each specified year

Headcount

		1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Trust	RG2	37	31	48	42	40
Queen Mary's Sidcup NHS Trust	RGZ	42	42	42	45	43
South London and Maudsley NHS Trust	RV5	11	10	9	9	10
The Lewisham Hospital NHS Trust	RJ2	29	27	29	30	29
South West London SHA	Q08	380	353	352	366	357
Epsom and St. Helier NHS Trust	RVR	83	76	67	71	63
Kingston Hospital NHS Trust	RAX	63	58	55	58	56
Mayday Healthcare NHS Trust	RJ6	34	34	37	37	32
Richmond and Twickenham PCT	5M6	[1]	[1]	[1]	3	3
Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	RPY	98	88	95	99	104
South West London Community NHS Trust	RVM	2	2	2	[1]	[1]
St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	RJ7	97	92	94	98	99
Teddington Memorial Hospital	RRR	3	3	[1]	[1]	[1]
Teddington, Twickenham and Hamptons PCT	5A6	[1]	[1]	2	[1]	[1]

[1] Not applicable.

Source:

Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many assaults there were on members of NHS staff during the last 12 months at hospitals in Greater London, broken down by National Health Service Trust. [179399]

Mr. Hutton: Information is not available in the format requested.

NICE Facilitators

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many National Institute for Clinical Excellence facilitators have been appointed within primary care trusts. [179452]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not collected centrally.

Osteoporosis

Phil Sawford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in England suffer from osteoporosis. [179681]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is not available centrally. However, hospital episode statistics give accounts of admissions to national health service hospitals in England by English residents. In 2002–03, there were 8,888 finished admissions episodes where the primary diagnosis was osteoporosis.

Note:

1. A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.

2. The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 (seven prior to 2002–03) diagnosis fields in the hospital episode statistics data set and provides the main reason why the patient was in hospital.

3. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data is ungrossed).

PHLS Media Services

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to safeguard the supply of agar plates in the event of a national emergency. [179392]

Miss Melanie Johnson: National Health Service Trusts and the Health Protection Agency (HPA) have well-established contingency plans for maintaining supplies of agar plates in the event of a national emergency. These include retention within the HPA of a capacity to respond to surges in demand for specialist media resulting from any outbreak or threat.

Professor Breckenridge

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he made of the interests held by Professor Breckenridge when appointing him to the Subcommittee on Pharmacovigilance. [179675]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Professor Sir Alistair Breckenridge was appointed as chairman of the Pharmacovigilance Sub-committee of the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM) from 1 January 1996 and served in that post until 31 December 1998. Until the end of 1997 he had declared personal interests in SmithKline and Beecham as a member of its Scientific Advisory Committee. It is acceptable for members of medicines advisory committees, and chairmen and members of sub-committees to hold interests in the pharmaceutical industry so long as they are declared publicly.

Members of all of the Medicines Act Advisory committees are required to follow a code of practice on declarations of interests in the pharmaceutical industry. Both the code and the individual details of members' interests are published annually in the advisory bodies' reports. Copies are available in the Library and are also available on the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency's web site (www.mhra.gov.uk). The code of practice sets out the types of interests that should be declared and also provides a framework for ensuring that conflicts of interests are avoided in the course of the advisory bodies' work. A legal adviser attends every meeting of the advisory bodies and ensures that the code is complied with.

Professor Sir Alistair Breckenridge was appointed as chairman of the CSM from 1 January 1999 until 31 March 2003. He has had no interests in the pharmaceutical industry since the end of 1997.

Public Health

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate the cost of establishing 25 consultants and specialists in public health per million population. [179678]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information we hold centrally does not allow us to give an accurate estimate of the cost of establishing 25 consultants and specialists in public health per million population. Public health specialist is a generic term and practitioners can come from a range of backgrounds and disciplines with varying rates of pay.

Registered Doctors

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate his Department has made of the number of clinicians newly registered to practise in the UK who were unable to find a recognised training post more than three months after they had registered to practise in each of the last three years. [178265]

Mr. Hutton: The data is not collected by the Department.

Sickness Absence

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the average number of days taken in sickness absence by *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses was in each year since 1996; [178474]

(2) how many days were taken in sickness absence by *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses in each year since 1996. [178475]

Mr. Hutton: Figures for sickness absence in the national health service in England were not collected by the Department between 1997 and 1999. We do not collect or produce information for number of days or the average number of days lost per NHS employee but publish the figures as a percentage lost of the time they should have been available for work. General practitioners and their staff are not included in these figures. The Department does not collect separate information for doctors or nurses.

The national NHS sickness absence level for 2003 is 4.7 per cent. This is slightly higher than the figure for 2002 of 4.6 per cent., but is lower than the figure for 2001 of 4.8 per cent. The overall NHS sickness absence rates have changed little over the last five years. The continued importance given to the management of sickness absence by NHS employers should show further improvements in the absence levels. The table shows the figures published for sickness absence in the NHS in England and its regions and covers the period from 2002 to 2003.

Percentages

	2002	*2003*
England	4.6	4.7
Regions		
North East	5.0	5.1
North West	5.0	5.2
Yorkshire and Humber	4.4	4.5
East Midlands	4.8	5.1
West Midlands	4.9	5.1
East of England	4.5	4.6
London	4.4	4.3
South East	4.1	4.2
South West	4.8	4.7
Special health authorities and other statutory bodies	5.4	4.2

Substance Misuse

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioners are involved in substance misuse shared care in each drug action team area. [180154]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not collected centrally.

Tetra Mast (Dursley)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will take steps to investigate changes in reported illness rates in Dursley, Gloucestershire in the vicinity of the recently installed Tetra mast. [179569]

Miss Melanie Johnson: This is a matter for Cotswold and Vale Primary Care Trust (PCT). I understand that the issue has not been raised with the PCT by local general practitioners and the PCT has not considered the mast as a key issue for public health locally.

Zyban

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what guidance he has given to general practitioners regarding possible side effects of use of the drug Zyban; [179181]

(2) if he will make a statement on yellow card reports received in connection with use of the drug Zyban. [179182]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Guidance on prescribing and use of Zyban, including possible side effects, is provided in the authorised summary of product characteristics for health professionals and patient information leaflet. Key prescribing information is also included in the British National Formulary which is sent by the Department to doctors and pharmacists within the national health service.

Since marketing, the safety of Zyban has been closely monitored by the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM). The CSM has looked at the accumulating evidence from Yellow Card reports of suspected adverse drug reactions (ADRs), received in association with its use. In accordance with their advice, a number of steps have been taken to optimise the safe use of Zyban and to minimise the risk of side effects, particularly seizures. This includes advice to general practitioners and smoking cessation clinics, which was issued in March 2001, reminding them of the safety profile of Zyban and of information posted on the CSM website.

In May 2001, the CSM issued new guidance strengthened warnings particularly about potential interactions with other medicines and advised a slower increase in the dose of Zyban in order to minimise the

risk of side effects, the lower 150mg dose should be prescribed for the first six days, increasing to 150mg twice daily on day seven rather than day four. This new guidance was issued in order to allow more time for the drug levels to stabilise, to help minimise the risk of adverse reactions, particularly seizures. Since this guidance was issued, the reporting rate of suspected ADRs has fallen significantly.

A total of 8,466 reports of suspected adverse reactions have been received via the Yellow Card scheme in the United Kingdom. The most commonly reported reactions are urticaria, insomnia, rash, headache, dizziness and nausea, which are recognised reactions and are listed in the product information provided to prescribers and patients. It is important to note that these suspected reactions are not necessarily caused by the drug and may relate to other factors such as nicotine withdrawal, other illnesses or other medicines taken concurrently.

The safety of Zyban continues to be monitored closely by the Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Authority/CSM. The CSM has advised that the balance of the effectiveness of Zyban in helping people to stop smoking, and the health benefits that this brings, compared with the risk of adverse effects remains favourable.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Appliance Safety Testing

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the policy of *(a)* the Department of Education and *(b)* each of the Education and Library Boards in Northern Ireland is on appliance safety testing, including the testing of portable appliances. [180295]

Mr. Gardiner: In line with Electricity at Work Regulations, which came into effect on 6 January 1992, and guidance from the Health and Safety Executive, the Department of Education's policy in relation to the testing of electrical appliances including portable appliances, is to test all electrical equipment on annual basis.

Each Education and Library Board has local arrangements in place to ensure that they comply with the requirements of the Electricity at Work Regulations (N.I.) 1991 and the associated Codes of Practice. These arrangements include the routine testing of portable appliances in Board properties and schools by approved contractors and suitably trained staff.

Comber High School/Bangor Academy

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the South Eastern Education and Library Board has completed a preliminary inquiry in order to establish the need for an equality impact assessment with regard to the public-private partnership scheme to provide new accommodation at Comber High School and Bangor Academy. [179889]

Mr. Gardiner: I understand from the Chief Executive of the South Eastern Education and Library Board that the Board carried out a screening exercise which concluded that an Equality Impact Assessment was not required for this project. The Board is awaiting a determination from the Equality Commission in relation to a complaint from UNISON about the Board's Equality Screening exercise.

Juvenile Justice Centre

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans the Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice has to inspect the Juvenile Justice Centre; and if he will make a statement. [179492]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice plans to inspect the Juvenile Justice Centre in the autumn.

Part-time Police Reserve

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress he has made in implementing the Patten Report's proposal to create an enlarged part-time police reserve. [180342]

Mr. Pearson: Implementation of the Patten Report's proposal to create an enlarged part-time police reserve rests currently with both the Police Service of Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Policing Board. The enabling legislation has been fully implemented.

A pilot recruitment exercise in four District Command Unit areas (Lisburn, Coleraine, Newtownabbey and Banbridge) has taken place.

On 17 October 2003, Denis Bradley, Vice Chairman of the Policing Board, issued a press release stating that all vacancies for part-time reserve officers in the four pilot districts would be filled. The first 10 officers from the pilot entered training in February 2004 and were attested on 5 March. However, the press release also announced the decision to evaluate the pilot recruitment exercise before a further recruitment exercise would take place to improve the process for subsequent rounds of recruitment. Following the outcome of the evaluation it will be a matter for the Policing Board and PSNI to decide the next phase of the recruitment of part-time reserve officers.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many officers have been recruited to the police part-time reserve in each of the last four years. [180343]

Mr. Pearson: The Police Service of Northern Ireland has provided the following information on the recruitment of part-time reserve officers in each of the last four years.

	Number of part time reserve recruited
2001	—
2002	—
2003	—
2004	108

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many officers have *(a)* resigned and *(b)* retired from the police part-time reserve in each of the last four years. [180344]

Mr. Pearson: The Police Service of Northern Ireland have provided the following information in respect of part-time reserve officers who have *(a)* resigned and *(b)* retired in each of the last four years.

	Resigned	*Retired*
June to December 2000	25	23
January to December 2001	51	24
January to December 2002	46	23
January to December 2003	48	32
January to June 2004	23	18

Pensioners (Dental Care)

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to introduce free dental care for pensioners in Northern Ireland. [180292]

Angela Smith: The Department currently meets 78 per cent. of the total cost of health service dentistry in Northern Ireland. As in the rest of the UK, all dental treatment for pensioners on pension credit guarantee credit is free and other pensioners, depending on circumstances, can get help with the costs involved through the Low-Income Scheme. There are no plans to change current policies in this area.

Public Bodies

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland who the members of the Ulster-Scots Agency are; how many meetings each member has attended since their appointment; and where each meeting was held. [176892]

Angela Smith: The following members of the North South Language Body constitute the Board of the Ulster-Scots Agency:

Jim Devenney
Alistair Simpson
Dr. Ian Adamson
Pat Wall
Bob Stoker
Dr. Linde Lunney
Eddie O'Donnell

Ian Adamson was appointed to the Board on 1 September 2003. The other members were appointed (or reappointed) on 13 December 2002. Since then the Board has met 11 times at the following locations:

	Location
February 2003	Franklin House, Belfast
March 2003	Waterfront Plaza
May 2003	Stranmillis University College
June 2003	RIA, Dublin
July 2003	Four Season Hotel, Monaghan
September 2003	Institute of Ulster-Scots Studies, Londonderry
November 2003	Strabane Council Office
January 2004	Franklin House
March 2004	Hilton Grosvenor, Edinburgh
April 2004	Jackson Hotel, Ballybofey, Co Donegal
May 2004	Grosvenor House, Belfast

Of the 11 meetings, Mr. Devenney, Mr. Simpson and Mr. Wall each attended nine; and Mr. Stoker five meetings. Mr. O'Donnell and Dr. Lunney attended 10 meetings during this period; while Dr. Adamson attended five of the six meetings held since his appointment in September 2003.

Rainbow Network

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much funding has been provided to the Rainbow Network in each of the last five years. [179659]

Mr. Spellar: Records indicate that none of the 11 Northern Ireland Government Departments or the Northern Ireland Office has provided funding to the Rainbow Network during the last five years.